

BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE

1928

BASIRHAT SESSION

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FOREWORD

The complete independence of the country was declared the national goal by the Indian National Congress at its Madras session. The Bengal Provincial Conference at Basirhat in 1928 echoed the same pledge. Subhash Chandra Bose, moving the resolution, said that it was not surprising that this was declared the goal ; what was surprising was that it took so many years for the Congress to declare it. He then related a story. When Lokmanya Tilak went to England, he was invited by Cambridge University to deliver a lecture. The English students who heard of Tilak as a firebrand politician listened to Tilak thundering that Indians wanted Home Rule within 15 years. The English students said, "If this be your extremist, we do not want to hear your moderates."

It was but natural that, under the prevailing sentiments, the Simon Commission would be boycotted. Accepting the Commission would tantamount to agreeing that the time and manner of transferring power to India could be determined only by the Parliament in England. The Commission demanded to examine the fitness of Indians to rule India. The boycott of the Simon Commission gave another fillip to the boycott of British goods, particularly the British cloth.

Whatever was said and done in the 1928 Bengal Provincial Conference, the year was not particularly a bright year for the Bengali politicians. Representatives of the

Congress got into the Bengal Legislative Council and Calcutta Corporation and voted against Congress decisions. The Congress suffered defeats in the Council and in the Mayoral election in the Corporation. The Hindu Muslim unity was torpedoed. It was widely believed that the Congress suffered defeat in Bengal because it abandoned the principle of nationalism and substituted it by the system of bribery : "give us votes and we shall give you jobs." The politics of Bengal was turned into a scramble for jobs, paid and unpaid.

The murky politics that estranged J. M. Sengupta from Subhash Chandra Bose later vitiated the freedom struggle at Bengal level. Amrita Bazar Patrika commented bitterly on this futile factional politics :

"At a time when our leaders show by their conduct that they believe in nothing but sensationalism in politics, Bardoli ought to set them furiously to think. The keen struggle in which the simple unlettered peasants of this taluka are engaged with the mighty British officialdom in India disregarding all consequences and with an undying faith in the justice of their cause ought to serve as a beacon light of their dedicated countrymen who are toying with politics... Deceit, double-dealing, intrigue, corruption, ~~past~~ nothing appears too mean for those who are engaged in the pastime of ministry-breaking as if the fate of the freedom movement in Bengal were indispensably bound up with the issue as to whether one set of worthless Ministers will be replaced by another."

Analysing J. M. Sengupta's presidential address at the Basirhat Provincial Conference, the Patrika expressed disappointment that it did not enunciate any clear and definite

plan of action. It did not analyse the reverses, in the Congress in the Bengal Legislative Council and the Corporation. There was only a casual reference to Hindu-Muslim unity but not a word to strengthen the forces of nationalism.

J. M. Sengupta demanded a Round Table Conference once again and requested the countrymen to boycott Simon Commission. The Bengalee wryly commented on this demand and sought to know what purpose one more Round Table Conference would serve. The goal was clearly laid down : Complete Independence. Another Round Table would be a waste of time.

J. M. Sengupta represented the Swarajist Party. The equivocations and evasions were suspected to be the party's distinctive quality and Bipin Chandra Pal observed that these leaders were reckless exploiters of undisciplined youth for personal propaganda.

By itself the Basirhat Conference was not memorable but as a reflector of Bengal politics of the time, it will be worth attention for students of the contemporary political scene.

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BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE

1928

Basirhat which is about forty miles away from Calcutta was all astir with crowds of people of all shades of opinion on Saturday when the Bengal Provincial Conference commenced its session in the afternoon.

The day dawned at Basirhat with great enthusiasm and national feeling when people began to pour in from Calcutta and other places in trains, buses, taxi cabs and motor cars and on foot. By noon the narrow roads leading to the pandal were crowded with visitors and delegates. More than two thousand delegates attended the Conference from different parts of Bengal.

The delegates who have come to Basirhat took great interest in the proceedings of the Conference. Several small houses including the Basirhat Town Hall on the river Ichamati were engaged for the

accommodation of the delegates and the volunteers were all attention to them.

Delegates' Special

The delegates' special carrying about four hundred delegates left Shambazar Station punctually at 8-30 a.m. amid prolonged shouts of "Bande Mataram." The special consisted four first class, one inter class and the rest third class compartments. Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta, the President-elect accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Haldar arrived at the station platform and was conducted to the compartment which was kept reserved for him.

Acharya Prafullachandra Roy accompanied by Mr. Satischandra Dasgupta and other prominent members of the Khadi-Pratisthan arrived next amid cheers. Acharya Prafullachandra Ray was followed by Seth Jamunalal Bajaj, Mr. Raja Gopalachariya, Mr. Manilal Kothari and others.

Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta received the party on the platform and shook hands with them amid cheers.

Several Congress Volunteers with badges also boarded the train and looked to the comfort of the delegates all through.

Punctually the station bell rang and the train steamed off amidst deafening shouts of Bande-Mataram. Between Shambazar and the Basirhat-

Kachari which covered about forty miles the train stopped at three or four main stations.

The Pandal

The pandal, which is a huge structure, has been erected on an open plot of land close to the Reception Committee office with the 'Khadi' Exhibition tent attached to it.

The pandal which has been erected after oriental design has accommodation for more than three thousand visitors.

President at Pandal

At 2-30 p. m. the President in a procession arrived at the pandal amid prolonged cheers. He was received at the gate by Sj. Harendranath Choudhuri, Chairman of the Reception Committee and the members and Secretary of the same.

He was then conducted to the tastefully decorated dias which was temporarily erected for the purpose. The entire pandal was lavishly decorated with flags and evergreen. The portraits of Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta and Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak and the map of India hang at different places. There were also matters of various kinds making patriotic appeal to the people.

The entire pandal was packed with delegates and visitors. There were several ladies in the enclosure at the back of the dias.

The prominent among those noticed were Srijukta Basanti Debi, Srijuts Raja Gopalachariya, Jamunalal Bajaj, Manilal Kothari, Subhaschandra Bose, Acharya Prafullachandra Roy, Mrinalkanti Bose, Sankarlal Bunker, T. C. Goswami, Dr. Bidhanchandra Roy, Mr. and Mrs. S. N. Haldar, Sjt. Bhupendranath Datta, Sj. Satyendranath Mitter, Lalitmohan Das, Bijoykumar Bose, Taranath Mukherjee, Kaminikumar Datta, Bijaykumar Chatterjee, Satyaranjan Bakshi, Mr. Abdul Karim, Dr. Promathanath Banerjee, Sj. Kisorilal Ghosh, Prof. Arunchandra Sen, Sj. Bankimchandra Mukerjee, Sj. Mohitos Roy Choudhury, Mrs. Latika Bose, Srijukta Sarnalata Debi, Sj. Lalitmohan Ghoshal and Srijukta Mohini Debi.

Mr. Spratt (communist) was also present.

First Day's Proceedings.

The proceedings commenced with the singing of the national song "Bande-Mataram", the whole house standing.

Don't forget Dumb Millions.

After the national song was over the Hon'.

Secretary of the Reception Committee read the following messages from leaders :—

The first message which was read was from Mahatma Gandhi. He in his message said that he was extremely thankful for the honour they had done to him by extending their invitation to him to attend the conference. Mahatmaji expressed his regret not to be able to attend the Conference owing to ill-health. He wished the Conference every success and also asked Bengal not to forget those who represented dumb millions.

Sj. Mahendrakumar Ghosh, President of the Dacca Congress Committee in his message, invited the next session of the Conference at Dacca.

Following gentlemen also sent messages :—Pandit Matilal Nehru, Sj. Satya Murti, Swami Jnanananda of Dacca, Sj. Loknath Mukherjee, and Dr. Protapchandra Guha Roy.

Address of the Chairman.

Rai Harendranath Choudhury, the Chairman of the Reception Committee in welcoming the delegates and visitors delivered an interesting speech. He dwelt with various problems of the country.

Referring to the appointment of the Simon Commission he said that the country was confronted with a great problem—even greater than the Partition

of Bengal and Punjab wrong—Jallianwala Bagh, crawling orders etc. during the Martial Law days in the Punjab. The Tory Cabinet of Britain taking opportunity of our weakness had grossly insulted India's self-respect by appointing an all-White Commission to judge India's fitness for Swaraj. But the speaker asked, would the British Parliament accept all these evidences of Indians if they were placed before the Commission ? But the Speaker said under the nature of procedure of the enquiry Indians, as a self-respecting nation, could have no other alternative but to boycott the Commission. Quoting Sir John Simon's own arguments in Parliament on Irish Free State Bill the speaker said, "when the Secretary of State for India asks us to face the facts these are the facts which he must face and when he asks us to consider what is the foundation upon which we are boycotting, I reply that the foundation is that which was pointed out by the Right Hon'ble Gentleman, the Chairman of the Present Commission." The Secretary of State said times without number that "boycott or no boycott, the Commission will carry out its task." And if the Legislative Assembly did not grant expenditure of the Commission, there was Viceroy's power of certification, if no representative committee were elected there was every possibility of a

nominated committee. Let that be done but, India would not be party to that report and would not work out any constitution prescribed by such a committee. The Indian National Congress, Liberal Federation, Khilafat Committee, Moslem League, and other organizations had all unanimously recorded their indignant voice of protest and resolved for a complete boycott of the Commission. But inspite of these universal indignation British Government wanted to continue the enquiry by this Commission. The result of the enquiry could easily be judged by the failure of the present Dyarchical system of Government which however was welcomed at least by a section of people. Lord Lytton rightly summed up Indian situation when he said that "They (Indians) were determined to ensure the failure of any system of which fell short of their demands."

How to carry out Boycott

Continuing the speaker said :

Now the question is how to carry out this boycott ? The problem is a complex one. The determination should be as strong and as sure as the vastness of the conflict. While boycotting the Commission we should turn our attention to the boycott of any constitution which may be framed by Parliament on the recommendations of the committee in negation of

India's right to self-determination. Sir Jhon Simon left India "with confidence in the ultimate success of their mission" and now it is time for action so that the Commission on their return find that the country is ready for boycott, effective and complete.

Salvation of India

Turning to boycott of British goods the speaker continued that when British Parliament has repeatedly ignored our demands, we as a subject nation had no other alternative but to apply that boycott weapon which has once been proved successful in Partition days. Khaddar propaganda no doubt constitutes one of the principal plans in our programme but at the same time there is room for Indian mill-made cloths since boycott includes within its scope Japanese and all other foreign cloths. I do not see why we should not take to boycott all other foreign articles as far as practicable together with that of cloth. This is however, my longstanding conviction that this boycott is not merely an economic problem but that it has close affinity to all other national problems. In this connection he shared same opinion with a distinguished thinker if this country who said : "The solution of the problem of the impoverishment of India depends mainly upon the reduction of the drain due to foreign industrial and

commercial exploitation. This could be effected in two ways, of which one may be called the positive, the other the negative. The former consists in the Industrial regeneration of India by indigenous agency on modern methods and the latter in stemming the tide of Western civilization, so as to reduce our demand for foreign manufactures. We have already seen that the positive method is not likely to be successful at least to any considerable extent. So the salvation of India depends mainly upon the negative method." "All that is needed is, that we should be guided by the ideals of our ancient culture. The maintenance of the supremacy of that culture is the essential pre-requisite of the success of the negative method.

Khaddar Movement

The speaker next referred at length to various other problems confronting the country such as village organization with special reference to Bengal Land laws, Bread problem and laid special stress on the production of khaddar which has not yet, in the opinion of the speaker made as rapid strides as it ought to have done. What an up-hill task yet remains to be accomplished and what a huge organization it is necessary to make the khaddar movement a success can be seen from the fact that

in Bengal out of about 85,000 villages khaddar spread in only 446 villages. In this connection the speaker reminded the audience to bear in mind Mahatmaji's few words which ran : "I suspect that the true meaning of Swadeshi is missed in the forest of words that surround that simple but life-giving word. Let us adhere to its root meaning and we shall discover nothing, but khadi in it. Swadeshi is "of one's own country." Among things of the villagers' daily use, cloth is the only thing that is "not of one's own country." That which they can easily make themselves is also cloth. Hence the Swadeshi that they can realise and without which they must starve is khadi and nothing else. Hence is khadi the only real Swadeshi for every patriot."

Problem of Education

Next comes the problem of education side by side with the bread and cloth problem. Here the speaker referred to the control of the Education Department over Secondary Education and the problem of Primary Education. Who will control this newly proposed Primary Education the speaker asked. An outstanding character of education controlled by the District Committees would hardly be of any benefit or utility. For as Mr. Bertrand Russel has put it relating to China as follows: "One can never rid

oneself of the feeling that the education controlled by white men is not disinterested: it seems always designed, unconsciously in the main, to produce convenient tools for the capitalist penetration of China by the merchants and manufacturers of the native concerned."

If the above statement is true of China it is equally true of other oriental countries.

"I consider," the speaker said "the compulsory and universal primary education as a hoax of the present age. For rather I would prefer what late Bankimchandra used to call "mass education." I warn my countrymen against the new legislation which is being sought to be enforced in the name of removing illiteracy by introducing Primary Education in this country. Let us not fall a prey to this fresh fetters which if forged will mean not only fresh taxation but hoping for a result which is absolutely uncertain.

Election of the President

Sj. Bijaykumar Bose then proposed Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta to the Chair. The proposal was seconded by Maulavi Mujibar Rahaman and carried amidst cheers. Mr. J. M. Sengupta then took the chair amidst cheers and shouts of 'Bande mataram.'

Address of the President.

The President, Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta delivered his speech in Bengali which was heard with rapt attention by the audience. Mr. Sen-Gupta finished his speech by 5 p. m. He delivered the following address :

Chairman of the Reception Committee and friends :

The Chair of the President of the Bengal Provincial Conference has been occupied for very many years in the past by illustrious sons of Bengal. I offer you my heartfelt gratitude for calling me to a position to which lustre has been shed by such great patriotic souls as Deshabandhu, Rabindranath and Aswinikumar and others and which my late lamented father had the honour of once occupying. I feel great pride of this honour but at the same time I cannot forget the great responsibility of the position. I hope you will co-operate with me in the discharge of my onerous duties and make me worthy of the trust.

Those Heroic Souls.

The political horizon of India is overcast with momentous problems. But I do not think their solution is very difficult. If on the one hand our mind is oppressed by the thought of grave duty and

responsibility, on the other there are bright rays which fill our hearts with hope. The great worker whom we lost from our ranks four years ago—who was snatched away from the love and regard of the whole nation by a cruel power and was deported to a far-off prison is back in our midst again. We hail back Sj. Subhaschandra to his place in our heart. Our hope and enthusiasm has been redoubled by having the noblest son of Bengal again in our midst. This time we will surely succeed in the great venture. I greet on behalf of the nation all the political prisoners—patriotic, heroic sons of Bengal, who have returned to freedom. In the great struggle for freedom I cordially welcome them back.

I express my heart-felt grief and sympathy for those who are still pining away in jails and in malarial swamps, and others who being crushed under this repression, have attained eternal freedom. I believe their suffering will soon be crowned with success. I say to the cruel power that kept them imprisoned without justification that they cannot long continue in that path with impunity. In August 1927 the Governor of Bengal publicly gave hopes of releasing the political prisoners. If the Governor of Bengal has forgotten those words, he should not forget that Indians will not long tolerate such tyranny. Until the cause of it is totally removed,

we shall know no rest. This is our firm determination.

Friends, standard-bearers in the struggle for freedom, in this day of national awakening, I greet you all. May we see good in what we have achieved, in what we have accomplished, even where we have failed and been thwarted. May the victory and the defeat of our past struggles, fatigue and despair nerve us with greater courage and enthuse us with new hopes and lead us on the path of freedom. We should not forget that we have a long path yet to tread—there are ups and downs in the journey forward—at every turn there is crisis—at every step, difficulty—but we cannot lose heart. The mountain of difficulty melts away before him, in whose heart the fire of freedom burns constantly. And at the end of this journey there will spring upon earth peace and love and a blissful paradise, while in the wake of tears in the eyes of thirty millions will shine forth radiant smile of delight. And limbs that for ages have been benumbed by the weight of shackles will vibrate with the glow of life. That blissful day is not a dream. The sun of freedom has already cast its glow on the eastern horizon.

With heart filled with hope I am greeting you, we have great task before us and not a moment to lose.

Stock-Taking

Before we plunge into the fight, on this national day let us devote some time to take stock of our present position. If we are to correctly understand the present situation in India, particularly in Bengal, we have to remember the processes by which we have been reduced to the present position. For this we call your attention to the political history of the past few years.

The years between 1885 and 1905 may be called the age of Petition, Prayer and Resolution. During that time there only grew in the heart of India the desire to find something but she did not know the best means of attaining it. From 1905 dates the age of Partition and Swadeshi agitation. In those memorable days the hope and enthusiasm that were kindled in the heart of young Bengal will ever remain imprinted in letters of gold in the history of Bengal. During that period of great awakening United Bengal succeeded in making the British power realise that Bengal has life and would not tolerate any dismemberment of her limbs. As a result, the British Raj was compelled to undo the injustice to Bengal.

But was it the awakening of Bengal alone ? Did it achieve its ends only by repealing the Partition of Bengal ? To the ordinary eye it seems so but the agitation of 1905 had its repercussion throughout

India. It is the first step in the path of freedom. The stirring of young hearts in Bengal was felt throughout India and it marked the beginning of national consciousness and patriotism in India.

Repression and Revolt.

The age that followed in the political history of the country may be called the days of Iron and Blood-shed. We did not look with favour on the activities of those young patriotic Indians. We have blamed them for providing the British Raj with excuses for introducing a cruel policy of repression in the country. But what is the root cause of this unrest ? Who are to blame ? What lesson the haughty utterance of the French Emperor “ I am the State” has for us all ? Was not the country ablaze from the day, when his words unmistakably proclaimed that the interests of the State and the People were different ? That political upheaval not only razed France to the ground but sent its repercussion through all Europe. This proves that until the State and the People are united by ties of common interest and the spirit of give and take, clash between the two is inevitable. The British Raj says “ Indians have to be repressed, they are rebels, they want blood-shed.” Well, may we ask who have made them rebels ? Who have invited them to blood-shed ? The only

answer is "the British Raj." The cruel repression of the administrative machinery and the crushing weight of the bonds of slavery have made the youths who are freedom-loving, by nature rebellious. But this does not mean we have lent our support to this party of rebellion. We are not advocates of unrest. We only want to say the best means of purging the unrest. We only want to say that the best means of removing the unrest—the remedy—does not lie in the way of mad repression. This unrest cannot be removed unless people's political and physical hunger is appeased. It is one-thing to repress unrest, another to remove it. Deportation, internment and imprisonment without trial may be successful temporarily in keeping unrest in check ; and it has no doubt, achieved some success for the moment. But has it uprooted the evil ? To quote an American writer, "if the flame of liberty is enkindled in a country, no amount of repression on the part of the State, can quench it. It may succeed for the moment in keeping it under control, but like fire underground, it keeps itself alive and through the smallest outlet flares up with redoubled virulence."

So this spirit of rebellion should not be repressed, but the cause of it has got to be removed. But ours is not that responsibility, it is not within the power of any political party. It is for us to put forward

our demands in a legitimate way. But what are we to do if others do not accede to them ? So the whole responsibility of appeasing this party of rebellion lies with the British Raj. If they do not remove the cause of unrest by granting to the people their just rights, there is nobody who can deal with it. The policy of repression is not a proper remedy. Remedy lies deeper in the root—the physician in this case has got to be treated first.

The Birthright of Freedom.

We demand our birthright of freedom, the denial of which has dwarfed our manhood and is threatening us with extinction. He who thwarts us in the attempt is our greatest enemy. Who are to blame to-day ?—we or those who are stifling our voice ?

But far from devoting any thought to our demand for just rights the British Raj is engaged in dealing repression with one hand and safeguarding its own interests with the other. In 1914 when the conflagration of war set ablaze the whole of Europe and the British power trembled on the brink of ruin —what did India do in that hour of grim peril ? England was then busy saving her life and honour, drawing forces from all parts of the Empire. Only a handful of army was left behind in India at that time. England may forget the words—so full of

magnanimity, which Mahatmaji uttered at that time, but the world will not.

Mahatma said, "India does not want to be free taking advantage of the grave peril of England." All India bowed to that command. India did not falter for a moment to rise to the height of magnanimity. When England called out standing on the verge of ruin, "save us, we will give you freedom," the heart of India responded to the eternal appeal of self-sacrifice. Men and money flowed from India to the succour of imperilled England.

But what is the result? When England got out of danger her good intentions evaporated. The people, who, when England was in death-grips with her enemies, were greeted as equals, got blows by way of repression when England got out of it.

On the 17th of August, 1917, Mr. Montagu declared :

"The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government, in India as an integral part of the British Empire. They have decided that substantial steps in this direction should be taken

as soon as possible, and that it is of the highest importance as a preliminary to considering what these steps should be that there should be a free and informal exchange of opinion between those in authority at home and in India."

British Hypocrisy.

What was promised in the declaration of 1917 became a matter for consideration after two years in 1919 and we were assured that a Commission would be sent to examine and report as to how far we were to be allowed to enjoy our rights. The mask of 1917 fell off and in the short time of two years the British administration appeared in all its naked hypocrisy.

From this time the British Government conscious of its own security, began to forge new fetters for India. The Rowlatt Act was passed in the teeth of unanimous Indian opposition. In the Jallianwala Bagh massacre the inhuman policy underlying the British administration of India stood before us in all its nakedness. Indians understood that the British Government had no compunction in massacring Indians at will.

The result was that India spurned at England's gift of condescension and rose up to a man at the call of Mahatma Gandhi to fight a non-violent war. In this India has given a new message to the blood-

thirsty nations of the world as to how to conquer an oppressing enemy with patience and forgiveness. That glorious chapter of events is not unknown to you.

In 1921 came this crisis of which the English writer Seeley had contemplated when he wrote that the British domination of India would fall to pieces when the entire Indian people, awakened to their birthright, would demand freedom. The tottering Government towards the end of that year grew anxious for a Round Table Conference. The offer for a compromise came from the Government itself. Along with our late revered leader Deshabandhu we were then in jail.

Here again the British Government played at its old game of posing as our benefactor and secretly working for our fall. After a prolonged consideration and hesitation the Government at last laid its hand on Mahatmaji with much trepidation. It was apprehended that India would not brook this tyranny. But it was otherwise. India peacefully stood by, as she had done when Deshabandhu and even his wife were taken to jail. This peaceful attitude had its own justification but the slackening of fight that followed resulted in immense injury. The Government was not slow to take advantage of this weakness. All talks of a Round Table Conference

ceased and the policy of repression began to be pushed on with greater vigour. It should serve as a warning in carrying on our fight in future. If we are to win we must prevent the recurrence of such lapses. But it should also never be allowed to dishearten us.

After Deshabandhu's release he proposed to work from within the councils to paralyse this oppressive administration and inspite of opposition he carried out his programme. This led to the creation of the Swarajya Party. These are all too recent to require any elaboration. What I want to point out is that following Deshabandhu our aim always has been to get a Round Table Conference. I shall presently explain what I mean.

A Round Table Conference.

By Round Table Conference we do not mean the institution of a gathering for show. It must be formed of persons duly elected and with unquestioned probity and impartiality to decide on our just and legitimate demands. The Government must enter into an undertaking that its decisions will be respected and given effect to without any modification or restriction.

But as I have said before our weakness has provided the Government with an advantage and it is now no longer anxious for a Round Table Conference.

Even in 1924 Lord Olivier had proposed “a representative delegation of British politicians of standing, six or seven, to meet a delegation of equal calibre appointed by the Central Legislature of India, to confer on these methods and see whether they could not come to an agreement.” Here even Lord Olivier had admitted that what was necessary to solve the Indian problem was a collaboration of opinions and not examination of the constitution or the recording of evidence.

But all this is now changed. In 1928 this same Round Table Conference is said to be an impossibility. It is no good putting this question to people who by changing their professions every season have set up before the world an example of colossal hypocrisy. It is an irony of fate that we have to mould our life and work to the dictates of others and our natural aspirations are sought to be regulated by the order of an extraneous authority.

Hindu-Muslim Unity

Then we come to a shameful episode of Indian history—I mean the Hindu-Muslim troubles. Though I do not attach any undue importance to the question from the stand-point of politics and though I sincerely believe that in this national crisis it is now a thing of the past, yet I must say that it has provided

the Government with a very handy excuse and opportunity. It must not to be forgotten that it was on account of this Hindu-Muslim difference that the Britishers got into India and secured control over her and again on account of this difference they are now tightening their grip. With that end in view they have sent the Simon Commission before its time.

India did not ask for this Commission. But the British Government has sent it with such hurry with the object that taking advantage of the communal differences the Commission in the name of conciliation may tighten the fetters round India's feet.

The Commission.

But India has seen through the game and that is why we hear all over the land the persistent cry asking the Commission to go back. The Indian National Congress, the Trade Union Congress, the Khilafat Conference, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Liberal Federation and all the other organisations have decided to boycott the Commission.

And this is perfectly justified. Why should we allow a third party to stand between us and our Motherland ? Why should we tolerate their impudent demand to examine our fitness ? As for evidence, enough was placed before the Muddiman

Committee. No, this gratuitous insult must be avenged.

Brothers, and Sisters, we should no longer allow this playing with our birth-right. Let these impudent people understand that you ignore them. Let the demand of all political parties for the boycott of the Commission reverberate throughout the length and breadth of this land. Everyone must understand that co-operation with this Commission will bring about irreparable mischief but a complete boycott of it will lead to a distinct gain. If any one, out of considerations for petty self-interest, co-operates with this Commission he will hereby be injuring the interests of all the future generations. I would particularly bring this to the notice of my Moslem brethren. I would request them to remember that if in this crisis in the life of the nation they overlook the greater issue out of consideration for personal or sectional or of any smaller interest that would result in bringing about ruin on the whole country, on both Hindus and Mussalmans.

It should always be borne in mind that this commission wants us to agree to it that "the time and manner of each advance can be determined only by Parliament upon whom responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian people."

We can never submit to this suicidal agreement.

What we insist on is a Round Table Conference and not a Commission. If a Round Table Conference was possible in 1921 and in 1924, why should it be impossible now? The Commission can give us nothing and we have nothing to ask from it.

Sir John then and now.

To expose the real nature of the Commission I shall give an example showing how these people act against their own professions. Speaking of the Irish Constitution Bill in 1922, Sir John Simon said :

“I think it is one of the encouraging features of the situation that this constitution is a constitution that has been drafted in Ireland by Irishmen for Ireland.” In another place he says—

“At any rate there is a real element of hope and confidence here in that this constitution is not a constitution which the British Parliament formulates and offers or confers upon Ireland, it is a constitution which the Irishmen themselves have drawn up and which they now apply to the Imperial Parliament to ratify.”

A premium of Violence.

Yet Sir John Simon coming to India has begun to sing to a different tune. The liberality shown to Ireland has been sadly wanting in his dealings with

India. And the "New Statesman" has given the reasons—firstly, it was a unanimous demand in the case of Ireland and secondly, the Indian leaders such as Pandit Matilal are not strong enough as the Irish leaders like Michael Collin were ; that is India has not the power to take up the sword as Ireland could in case her demand was not complied with.

This is certainly admirable logic but whatever it is we are going to follow what Sir John had said in the case of Ireland. We must frame our own constitution and insist that India must be governed according to that constitution and if our demand is not complied with and what was apprehended in the case of Ireland really appears in India, we must not be held responsible for it.

An Indian Constitution.

The Simon Commission came, toured the country and went back being satisfied only with got-up receptions and dinners. Now, we must realise exactly what the leader of the Commission said with regard to Ireland. Our main duty now is to prepare a constitution and I therefore earnestly request you that before the Commission comes to India again you should ratify that constitution in a convention of the representatives of all parties and communities. To this, I draw the attention of the Assembly,

Congress, Muslim League and such other organisations.

Some people are of opinion that no good result would accrue from merely making a constitution, but I request you to grasp it particularly that there is great utility in this constitution making. It is not true that it is easy and at the same time useless to form a paper constitution but no Government, however powerful and formidable, can resist the enforcement of a constitution which will be formed of with the consent of all communities and which the different political parties in India will accept as their own. That such an unanimity and termination will be a terror to the Government, I said before, and it is also judicated by what the "New Statesman" wrote.

Again, the Britishers declare before the world that we dont know what we want and we have no administrative capacity. If therefore we can prepare an unanimous constitution we shall be able to demonstrate to the world that we are not children, we understand self-Government and we understand our rights.

Already I have said that the misunderstandings between Hindus and Moslems are considered by the Government as one of the greatest weapons in their hands. They think that no unanimous constitution

is possible in the face of these disunions. We will have to disprove it ; we will have to show that the 33 crores of Indians can stand up as one great nation by forgetting communal discord—selfishness, and narrowness in this national crisis. We will have to show that Government, actuated by mean and selfish motives, is spreading lies and calumnies throughout the world. I appeal to you to-day to lead a campaign against these lies. Forget petty interests and patriots as you are, be prepared for the battle against this mendacious propaganda. There is another thing for which the drawing up of a constitution is urgently necessary. About 95 per cent. of the population in India is poor and illiterate. Incessant struggle against poverty has taught them to think that they are doomed to squalor and poverty and that any change is unthinkable. So long we had been telling them that Swaraj is coming ; it will benefit us. We should explain to these 95 per cent. the real nature of Swaraj as also how Swaraj will benefit them. They are the soul of the country, the strength of the nation ; and in the national struggle their co-operation is absolutely indispensable.

Electorate

Now, as regards the question of electorate, you will certainly agree with me that there should be

joint electorates. The main defect of separate electorate is that it will bring in not only political but other forms of narrowness. In work for the good of the country, it is dangerous to keep up any communal division. It will lead to mutual recrimination and will end in communal strife and disunion. And I have not the least doubt that apart from the question of disunion, joint electorates are indispensable for the welfare of the country for on that basis alone the communities in India may forget all differences and discords and may have the largeness of heart to show mutual tolerance. In this national crisis communal disunion must not be accentuated. Taking advantage of this weakness the British are circulating that we shall not be able to defend ourselves. Unless we can forget all communal misunderstanding if and when occasion demands it. Let England know that for the good of the country, India acts with agreement and unanimity ; let England realise it that to save India from foreign invasion England by herself has no greater power than India herself. Except by international alliances and treaties England as well as India is equally incapable of defending herself from outside attack. In the present age the political atmosphere of the world portends so much danger that no single nation can guarantee its safety merely by itself. England,

America, or Japan cannot exist even for a day, unless it makes an alliance with a neighbouring power. This is as much true in the case of India also. It does not indicate that she is powerless, on the other hand England's greed for India's resources only proves that she (India) has strength. So, like all other countries India will also have to arrange for her defence in all times by international agreements. For, not to speak of Canada and Australia, even such powerful nations as England and America have to maintain alliances for self-defence. Can anybody interfere with the freedom of England ? America and Japan on the plea that without such alliances self-defence is impossible, or on that account suggest withdrawal of Self-Government from Canada or Australia ?

Boycott

Now, I am drawing your attention to a very important matter. We will now have to carry on with full vigour the campaign for the boycott of British goods, specially British cloths. We know that we should wear Swadeshi cloths for the welfare of ourselves and of the country. But that is not all, henceforth we should know this that the boycott policy is our most formidable political weapon. You know well that this boycott policy will solve our economic

problems, but we should know also that boycott will weaken the Government. Our joint endeavour is bound to lead to a grave problem in Britain. I request you brothers and sisters to accept the vow of Swadeshi on this National Day. Let us not touch British goods especially British cloths. Let India use Swadeshi goods, let her be prosperous, and let her enemy become weak. Let the weapon of boycott in the hands of India, excite terror in the minds of the foreigners.

Volunteer Organisation.

Another proposal I place before you. A volunteer corps should be formed in every district and sub-division of Bengal. They will be in the service of the country under proper leadership and under strict discipline. They will carry the message of the Congress to the illiterate, in propagation of 'khaddar' and in organising the people on the basis of their grievances. This All-Bengal Volunteer Corps will be an adjunct to the Congress organisation.

In this connexion I want to make one thing clear. We want volunteers, for the work of the Congress, for our freedom. And this corps should remain as a permanent 'Congress Volunteer Corps.' But those who will enlist themselves should not forget the real import of the word volunteer and

should not hope that the Congress will maintain them. In fact it is impossible to do so. So, I appeal to able and young patriots of the land that unless they accept these honorary posts, salvation of the country will be impossible.

Our people are half-starved—the British have physically oppressed us, have made us starve and have destroyed the power of mental perception. So, we cannot afford to ignore this problem of hunger. I appeal to educated youngmen not to crowd at the door of the Government offices for slavery but to stand firmly and freely on their own legs and fall back upon the land. In this respect help both from the Congress and the distinguished is essentially necessary. If by the combined efforts of all, young Bengal is inspired to take to trade, commerce and agriculture, we will have self-reliant men and women of independent spirit.

If once educated young Bengal goes back to the village, they will find there amply scope of work. But they must rest content with coarse cloth and plain food. The blessing of the whole country and the future nation will be theirs. I do not deny that it is easy to lecture in meeting or to utter some well-arranged words against the Government, but this campaign is really very difficult. Those who will be the pioneers in this work may not find much fame

or pleasure in it and on the other hand may have to endure much hardship ; but this is why I appeal to the youth of Bengal, for they have been doing the most difficult fight in freedom's battle. In all ages and in all countries, youths are the pioneers in struggle for freedom. Will they not take their place ? Come ye and by your "Sadhana" bring ever-lasting good to your country.

For this work in rural areas the services of young Bengal are very necessary. That is why I make this appeal particularly to them. Taking advantage of the ignorance (which is due to want of education) of our peasant class Government are misleading them, and many of them have already left off working for the provision of their own food. They are now growing jute in their paddy fields and thus helping foreign exploitation in Bengal. It is fortunate that a propaganda has been started for the restriction of jute cultivation, and I draw your attention to this noble work.

To educate the ignorant masses in this rural economy and to promote indigenous industry and trade —all these things rest in the hands of the youth of Bengal and these are the first steps in our national struggle. It is our common experience that the young men of Bengal are not weak and this time too we hope to see their same capability and resourcefulness.

The Student Movement

I think I shall be wanting in the discharge of my duty if I close this address without referring to the present unrest among the student community. The charge against this great awakening amongst the students is that they have become indisciplined, disobedient and impertinent. I do not deny there is excitement and unrest but when we think over it a bit deeply we find that the charges that have been levelled against the students are groundless. The cause of this excitement is not want of discipline on the part—that the students have become disobedient is not also true.

In every country in the youthful heart there is an independent spirit—the young men of all countries are full of vivacity and vigour. The youthful heart naturally wants to know and love the motherland. Naturally they are eager for their legitimate right. The fight of the youngmen is against the ruthless repression launched upon them by the Government. So, if there is anybody to blame for this upheaval, it is the oppressors and not the oppressed.

When the newly awakened youth of Bengal want to realise their mission and cherish a love for the motherland the present unhealthy system of education and its directors are attempting to purge out all

patriotism from them and give them a drilling in loyalty. From the early life heartless and organised attempt is made to create in the youths a slavish fascination for the British. But education and superstition cannot live together. And so when these authorities fail here they try to achieve their purpose by engendering a fear for the British through repression. The atmosphere is poisoned with suspicion and spies are set on the youths. This they can never stand and the only alternative for them is to succumb to it. But that too is against the nature of youth. So a reaction ensues and they seek to get out of these soul-killing surroundings. I can never regard this as culpable. To me the only solution seems to be the establishment of freedom and national education. There is no other means of checking this new uprising of youth.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,—Allow me to call you again to join the battle of freedom ; let all differences be obliterated and all self-interest be effaced ; stand up as a nation under the Indian tricolour, determined to recover your right. Do not fall back from fear of imprisonment, deportation, repression or even death, but send your call to the lowliest of the lowly and let them understand that the terror which keeps them down is all hollow and will give way to a challenge.

My appeal lies to the youth of Bengal. It is for

them to bear the burnt of the fight and build up a glorious future. It is for them to re-instil into Indian heart message of hope and courage.

To-day we can spare none. I appeal to the Musalmans, I appeal to the Hindus—I appeal to all the communities and institutions to join in this holy work. A great Indian nation—freedom of India—and peace for the world,—in the name of God I call upon every son and daughter of India to join in carrying out this noble mission.

Rajagopalacharia

After the presidential address, Sj Rajagopalacharia was called upon to speak on the present situation.

Sj. Rajagopalacharia said that he would confine himself to only one thing, namely Khadi work. That was the business that brought them to Bengal. Their mission was to strengthen the Khadi movement in the province. There were two ways of strengthening the movement, one by weaving Khadi and the other by putting money in the hands of poor Khadi workers.

Referring to a part of the presidents speech in which he referred to starving millions, the speaker said that food has got to be provided for hungry millions otherwise it was impossible to build up the superstructure of politics.

At this stage a severe storm burst, necessitating abrupt end of the proceedings.

Subjects Committee

The Subjects Committee meets to-night at 8 p. m.

Second days Proceedings.

The Conference met again on the 8th April at 2 p. m.

The President at the outset said that as most of the delegates had expressed a desire to leave the place in the evening he as President of the Conference had been requested to close the deliberation by that time. And considering the heavy agenda of business to be gone through within this short time, he would allow only 10 minutes to every delegate to move the resolution standing against his name.

A condolence resolution was moved from the chair expressing sincere condolence at the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan,* Lord Sinha, ex-President of the Indian National Congress, Amulyabhushan Mukherjee of Bhola Congress Committee, Sm. Khirodabasini Debi, mother of Sachindranath Sanyal, the Kakori Prisoner, Ramchandra Das, and Satischandra Adhikari of Midnapur Congress Committee, Anurup Sen of Chittgang, Detenu

Sivasankar Brahmachari, a political prisoner, Gurunath Chakravarty of Bhola, Khaje Suleman Kader of Dacca, Prithwischandra Roy of Faridpur, Jitendranath Maitra of Bogra, Umeshchandra Chatterjee of Bankura, Atulchandra Ghosh of Uluberia, Jasodaranjan Paul of Tipperah, Gispati Kabyatirtha of Khulna, Bhupatinath Basu, founder of Anti-circular Society, Rajendranath Lahiri, Lalitkumar Mitra of Calcutta, Anathbandhu Guha of Mymensingh and Rameschandra Banerjee of Tipperah and expressing sympathy for the bereaved families.

The resolution was carried all standing.

Complete Independence as Goal.

Sj. Subhashchandra Bose then moved the following resolution :

“This Bengal Provincial Conference declares that complete independence is the goal of India.”

In moving the resolution Sj. Bose said, that though the Indian National Congress had only recently accepted it, the idea was not a new thing in Bengal politics. Twenty years ago it was in Bengal that Sj. Aurobindo Ghosh declared from the platform and also in the columns of his organ “*Bande Mataram*” that the goal of India was complete independence. Without entering into the history of

the controversy that arose in the wake of the division of the country into two camps, extremists led by Sj. Aurobindo Ghosh himself, and moderates, as the result of the bold assertion of this ideal, Sj. Bose said that it was undeniable that the message of Aurobindo created unheard of enthusiasm among the younger section of Bengalees.

The present resolution after several unsuccessful attempts had been unanimously accepted by the Indian National Congress at Madras session. It meant the triumph in the wider political field of India of the idea that was conceived in Bengal twenty years ago.

Criticising the attitude of those who ridiculed the Congress for accepting this resolution Sj. Bose said that by the clear enunciation of the goal of India the Congress was not made the laughing stock of the world but it was rather the want of it so long which had made it so. The moment India's goal had been declared from the Congress She had been raised in the estimation of the world.

Sj. Bose then related how the youngmen of India having had no such definition of the Congress ideal used to be ridiculed abroad. When Lokmanya Tilak went to England he was invited by the Indian students of the Cambridge University to deliver a lecture. Lokmanya was known to the English

students as a firebrand politician. Many of them came to hear him. But after listening to his speech in which he said Indians wanted Home Rule within 15 years, some of them said "if this be your extremist, we do not want to hear your moderates."

Maulavi Jalaluddin Hossain seconded the resolution. He said that it was but natural for a nation to declare that Swaraj or complete independence was its goal.

The resolution was put to the vote and carried.

Commission Boycott.

Sj. Bijoykrishna Basu next moved the following resolution :

"Where as the appointment of the Simon Commission by the British Government is a negation of India's right to Self-Government this Conference supports a wholesale boycott of the Commission."

(a) This Conference requests all Indians not to welcome the Commission and not to come into any social or political association with it, when it again comes back to India.

(b) This Conference requests the members of all the different legislative bodies—Provincial as well as Indian to prevent the appointment of Committees of legislatures to co-operate with the Commission and

to throw out all proposals relating to the expenditure for the Commission or co-operation with it.

(c) This Conference asks the countrymen not to give evidence before the Commission or make any petition to it directly or indirectly, or co-operate with it in any way.

(d) This Conference asks the Working Committee of the All-India Congress Committee in consideration of the present political situation in India to be particularly careful that no distinguished leaders of that committee or no member of the Legislatures leave India without special reason.

In moving the resolution Mr. B. K. Bose said that after accepting the independence resolution it was needless to say that anybody would go to the Simon Commission to ask any favour. The first act of the Commission Drama was over. The members of the Commission came to India and went away. They would come again in October, but the Indians should see that the Commission was completely boycotted. *

Many reasons had been advanced, said Sj. Bose, regarding the boycott of the Simon Commision, the most important of which was that it was a negation of the right of self-determination of the Indian people. It would be said that by adopting the resolution the Provincial Conference would be merely

requesting the people without giving them any lead in the matter. But asked Sj. Bose, what lead could the Provincial Conference give to the people if they failed to act up to it. In the Bengal Council Mr. Surendranath Roy represented the Municipal area of 24-Parganas in the jurisdiction of which the Conference was meeting. He was returned to the Council as a Congress candidate but what did he do when the no-confidence motion came before the Bengal Council ? Mr. A. C. Banerjee, another Congress member in the Council, had the supreme honour of taking tea at the "At Home" given by Calcutta Club in honour of the Simon Commission. If such was the attitude of even Congress members what could the Provincial Conference do except requesting ?

Proceeding Sj. Bose said that having regard to what Mr. Mahammed Ali Jinnah had said in regard to Skeen Commission in the Assembly they could safely presume as to what the Simon Commission would do and what report they would submit. In the circumstances, concluded Sj. Bose, it was the duty of every one to bring pressure upon every member of the Council so that no Committee might be formed in the Bengal Council. If necessary they would offer 'Satyagraha' at their places.

Maulavi Mujibar Rahaman in seconding the resolution said that they knew why the Simon Seven

had come to India. They had come here to record evidence of some of the men of anti-nationalist mentality and submit a report according to their evidence. It should therefore be their first duty to boycott the Commission at every stage and in any form. The motive behind the appointment of the Commission was transparent. If there were any individual or community who expected favours from the Commission by co-operationg with it they should beware for the Commission was purely an eyewash, the report had already been decided upon, and so there was no chance of any additional favour from them. So, no self-respecting man could co-operate with the Commission in any way.

Sj. Mohitosh Roy Choudhury moved an amendment to the effect that in as much as the success of the boycott movement required that all nationalist leaders should remain in India and the goal of independence, as decided by the Congress was inconsistent with participation in the Empire Parliamentary Conference and as the Government of Canada was hostile to the people of Indian delegates to the Empire Parliamentary Conference to abandon their projected visit to that country.

Sj. Bijoykrishna Bose rose to a point of order and said that if the mover liked he could draft another resolution on that subject.

The President ruled that the first part of the amendment was in order but the latter part was not. The mover, could move the first part but not the second part as it had no connection with the resolution. He could have, said the President, move a separate resolution through the Subjects Committee.

Sj. Rai Choudhury said that if the last portion of his amendment was ruled out of order, he did not wish to move his amendment for the present.

The original resolution as moved by Sj. B. K. Bose, was put to vote and carried.

Swaraj Constitution

Prof. Rajkumar Chakravarty then moved the following resolution :

“This Conference conveys its sincere thanks to the All-Parties’ Conference at Delhi for their repeated attempts to put into effect the resolution of the last Madras Congress to set up an Indian Constitution suited to India by bringing together all the political parties in this country. It also urges the different parties to bring the matter to a success before next September.”

In moving the resolution he said that if they really wanted to establish Swaraj in the country all political parties should be united. He thanked the leaders for the organisation of the Unity Conference.

In conclusion he hoped that a Committee should be formed as soon as possible to frame a Constitution.

Sj. Bijoykrishna Chatterjee in seconding the resolution said that they were crying for Swaraj and Complete Independence. That could not be attained so long all the different political bodies were not united.

Sj. Basantakumar Mazumdar opposing the resolution said that they really wanted to put the All-Party Constitution before the Simon Commission. If the leaders really wanted to draft the Constitution for India they could have done after the Simon Commission had finally left India. The acceptance of the resolution presupposed the recognition of the Simon Commission which the country with one accord had boycotted.

Maulavi Aftab Ali in supporting the opposer said that the draft of the Constitution of the All-Party Conference at Delhi, had been drawn up with full Responsible Government and not complete independence as the goal of India. He said that the acceptance of the resolution would strengthen the bonds of slavery only.

Maulavi Jalauddin Hossain opposed the motion of Sj. Mazumdar. He said that the original resolution was a well considered resolution. It was drafted to expedite the work and nothing else.

Sj. Jogeshchandra Gupta said that he failed to understand the reason for opposition to this resolution. It was, perhaps, due to some confusion as to its meaning. The Resolution meant to express appreciation of the attempts of those, who endeavoured to come to an agreement among the Indians themselves, as regard the future Constitution of India. The labour of the All-Party Conference was not finished yet and there was no Constitution prepared by it. So it was premature to condemn it beforehand. The framing of Constitution was a reply to the challenge of Lord Birkenhead. Those who did not wish to give a reply to the challenge of Lord Birkenhead could vote for the opposition. The Congress would not go back from the path of Independence. But Congress was not the only party in India. There were other parties in the country and the Constitution would bring every party together to give a fitting reply to Lord Birkenhead's challenge.

Sj. Subhashchandra Bose said their difficulties would not be solved by uttering mere hot words. In the present deplorable position to which the country was reduced, it behoved everyone to speak and act with great responsibility. What the aim was of the All-Party Conference ? It was formed in pursuance of the Madras Congress Resolution. The task before them was very hard and success depended on the

co-operation of all. Lord Birkenhead threw up a challenge to India when he said that India was so torn by conflicting creeds and interests that Indians could not come to an agreement as regards their Constitution among themselves. If the All-Party Conference succeeded in accomplishing its appointed task, it would be the fittest answer to the insulting challenge of Lord Birkenhead. Any attempt to defeat its object was to accord support to Lord Birkenhead.

Finally, Sj. Bose pleaded for patience. The All-Party Conference had not yet finished its labours. When it did so it would be time for judging the result of its endeavour.

The resolution was put to vote and was carried by an overwhelming majority.

Boycott of British cloth.

Sj. Bankimchandra Mukherjee moved the following British Cloth Boycott Resolution :

"For the self-determination of India this Conference requests the people to boycott British goods and particularly the British cloth.

Sj. Bankimchandra Mukherjee in commending the resolution for acceptance by the Conference regretted that the move for boycott was inaugurated only recently. It ought to have been done imme-

diately on the day following the battle of Plassey. Boycott for boycott's sake was the spirit in which the resolution should be accepted. If they could successfully boycott British goods there was yet hope for India. To attain political salvation they would have to make them strong and self-sufficient so as not to depend on other countries for any thing and to do that they would have to sacrifice their luxury and that was not much in comparison with the political salvation for which they were all crying.

Sj. Probbatkumar Ganguly, in seconding the resolution pointed out that by boycotting British goods they wanted to establish their national rights in the same way as the Chinese did by boycotting foreign articles in China. He said that speeches were not necessary in asking the people to boycott British goods. The people who had the slightest respect for their country would not touch the British goods. In conclusion the speaker appealed to the audience to take to Charka and home industries.

Sj. Hemendranath Das Gupta moved the following amendment :

“As a protest against the insult that the British Government has done to India by appointing the Simon Commission and against the detention of many workers of Bengal without trial in jail and also for

the establishment of India's national demand this Conference requests the people to boycott British goods, particularly British cloth."

Sj. Das Gupta said that the boycott of British goods, particularly British cloth, was to be regarded purely as a political weapon. He instanced the boycott of tea by America as an instance in point.

Sjts. Amarendra Ghosh and Prafulla Banerjee supported the amended resolution.

Sj. Subhashchandra Bose, in further supporting the resolution said that Sjt. Hemendranath Das Gupta's resolution was the same as that adopted by the Council of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. It was adopted by the Council for three distinct reasons :

- (1) The insult heaped on India by the appointment of Simon Commission,
- (2) the Detention of young Bengalees without trial, and
- (3) the realisation of Indians' right to self-determination.

The mover of the original resolution accepted the amendment, which was moved and adopted.

Wear Khaddar.

Sj. Satischandra Das Gupta moved the following resolution :

“Whereas foreign cloth worth crores of rupees are imported to India every year, greatly impoverishing the country and leading the weavers to ruin, this Conference requests the people to wear Khaddar and introduce hand loom and Charka in every home to revive this almost extinct cottage industry of the country.

In moving the resolution Sj. Das Gupta said that the fact that Khaddar had not succeeded to the degree that everyone wished it to do was due to the misapprehension that many people had in regard to the ultimate success of Charka. Everyone of the country was expected to sacrifice a little for winning freedom of the country and he hoped the same allowance would be made in regard to Khadi and Charka.

Sj. Rajagopalacharia, in seconding the resolution said that just before the present resolution was moved another resolution had been adopted over which there was a trifling difference on the question of the preamble. It was a resolution to boycott all British cloth. On the present resolution on Khadi, however, there was no such difference. It was only where there was difference of opinion that they usually became attentive and when there existed no such difference people walked out because it was not interesting. But only where they were united they could expect that the resolution though not

interesting inside the house would be effective outside it.

Boycott of British goods was a beautiful thing and the speaker by all means wished success for those who wanted to do it. But the success of the boycott depended to a great extent on their capacity to produce Khadi in the country. Khadi far from injuring Swadeshi industry would benefit even the Swadeshi mill industry of Bombay and Ahmedabad by infusing a Khadi spirit in the minds of the people. He implored the youngmen of Bengal to wear Khadi not only as a mark of their anger and resentment against the action of the Government but as principle and as a permanent token of reality.

He, therefore, appealed to the youngmen of Bengal to adopt the resolution with a firm determination to carry it out and if they could do that it would give the greatest pleasure to Mahatma Gandhi who could not come there but had sent his message to them.

Sj. Sankarlal Bunker said that the subject of Khadi was a common cause with all of them.

They were all united that Khadi was a factor of economic betterment of the masses of the country and it had also a political force behind it. They had adopted a resolution for the boycott of British cloth, which was a tried weapon. In order that this great

movement of boycott could succeed they were required to enlist the sympathy of the masses. The cloth that they wanted to boycott was not merely used by the educated class but by the uneducated villagers as well. Unless they were able to induce them to give up that cloth it was impossible to achieve their object. Unfortunately these poor unsophisticated people were still uneducated and unenlightened. Under the circumstances it was rather difficult for them to realise the complexity of the problems that they might put before them in the shape of their boycott of British cloth.

If they wanted to build any bond between the masses and classes that could be only an economic bond. Here was a great opportunity for them to go to the villages and tell the people that the great movement was going to benefit them. If they could find that the boycott movement was not only a political weapon but was going to help them materially and would remove their poverty, they would easily be able to enlist their sympathy. There was no link to connect the masses and the classes except Khadi, the message of which when conveyed to the villagers would make them understand that their economic betterment would come through it.

Sjt. Kanda Venkat in supporting the resolution

said that if Swaraj could be established in the country it would be done through one programme and that was Charka and Khaddar.

Sjt. Monilal Kothari also supported the resolution.

At this juncture the President announced the receipt of two messages, one from Moulana Sawkat Ali from Lahore and another from Sj. Rameschandra Bagchi of Maldha wishing the Conference every success.

The Khadi resolution was then put to vote and carried.

Police firing at Bamungachi.

Dr. Subodh Kumar Basu moved the following resolution :

This Conference strongly condemns the brutal firing on the unarmed and peaceful strikers of Lillooah at Bamungachi and expresses its condolences for those killed and wounded. It also conveys its sympathy to the relatives of dead and wounded.

This Conference expresses its indignation at the action of the Government, who far from remaining neutral in the fight between Labour and Capital were trying to suppress the agitation by opening fire as they have done in Bamungachi, Kharagpur, Madras, Bombay and other places.

This Conference requests the Congress to take steps to make the Labour movement a success.

Dr. Subodh Kumar Bose in moving the resolution said that after the firing at Bamungachi, Sjs. Subhashchandra Bose, Mrinalkanti Bose and the speaker went to the place of firing and after enquiry found that there was no justifiable cause to open firing which was only resorted to because the victims had unfortunately black skins on their persons. Those poor labourers wanted the increment of their wages and they got bullets in return.

Maulavi Altaf Ali, in secconding the resolution, said that they should not exhaust their feeling by condemning the action alone but should teach the murderers a lesson of organising the labourers and peasants.

The resolution was put to vote and carried.

Communal Unity.

Sri Kaminikumar Datta then moved :

“As communal outbreak is causing harm to the country’s cause, this Conference is requesting both the communities to work together.

“This Conference also accepts the Unity Resolution passed in the Madras Congress and accepted in substance by the All-India Moslem League.”

In moving the resolution Sj. Datta said that the experience that he could gather from the Hindu-Muslim conflicts at Comilla was not neither of the parties could gain anything from such quarrels. It was the third party which only could strengthen its position from such dissensions. Those and those only, who had any personal experience of such quarrels, could feel as to what was the extent of shame and humiliation when the Government was approached for help at the time of these unfortunate incidents. Hindu-Muslem unity was absolutely necessary for the attainment of Swaraj. There were many cases of Hindu-Muslem trouble in the country and for that neither of the party could be blamed. They have now realised their mistake and he hoped that there would be no more fight between Hindus and Mussalmans for the benefit of the third party.

Sj. Purusattam Roy, Maulavies Altaf Ali and Jalaluddin Hashimi seconded and supported the resolution which was carried unanimously when put to vote.

Move to revive the Congress Committees

Sj. Mohimchandra Das of Chittagong moved :

“This Conference requests the people of Bengal to establish and to revive the Congress organisations throughout the country.”

The resolution was seconded by Sj. Pramathanath Banerjee and was carried unanimously.

Sj. Sureschandra Das then moved a resolution requesting the people of Bengal to use country-made articles even at a great sacrifice, in order to revive the national industry of the country and to make the country self-reliant.

The resolution was supported by Sj. Nirmalchandra Bhattacharjee and Srijukta Mohini Devi and was carried.

Jute Cultivation

Sj. Amarendranath Ghosh moved the following resolution :

“Whereas jute is the richest agricultural product of Bengal and is mainly grown here, whereas the agriculturists of Bengal through ignorance having during the last two years produced jute in excess of the demand have been compelled to sell it on a national price, whereas commerce in the present day, world cannot carry on without gunnies produced from jute, whereas a proper control of the cultivation and selling of jute in Bengal will increase the wealth of the province as well as of its people and whereas huge quantities of jute are now lying in stock this Conference requests the agriculturists of Bengal to

reduce the cultivation of jute by half of the last year's production."

The resolution was seconded, supported and accepted.

The following resolutions were moved from the Chair and accepted.

(1) This Conference severely condemns those who having got into the Legislative Council and the Calcutta Corporation as representatives of the Congress or with Congress help have voted against the Congress decisions and asks them to resign their seats in accordance with their understanding.

(2) This Conference conveys its congratulations to the people of Howrah, Jessore, Narayanganj and Kushtia on achieving a triumph for the Congress by electing Congress nominees in the Municipal election.

(3) This Conference urges for an organisation of a permanent band of volunteers for national work.

(4) This Conference conveys its sympathy to those patriotic youths who have been put into jails without trial or through unjust trials or put under other restraints and feels proud of the sufferings undergone by the youths of the country for patriotic causes.

(5) This Conference asks the Bengal Provincial

Congress Committee to take necessary steps to include the district of Manbhum in the province of Bengal in accordance with the decision of the All-Parties' Conference at Delhi to reorganise the provinces on a linguistics basis. This Conference further asks for the inclusion into Bengal of the districts of Singbhum, Santal Parganas, Sylhet, Kachar, Surma Valley, Purnia, Bhagalpur as well as all the other districts speaking Bengali.

(6) In consideration of the present miserable state of health of the Bengali youths this Conference requests the secretaries of the District Congress Committee to set up ideal gymnasiums under their supervision in every district for the training of volunteers and other youths and to open such centres in every sub-division of the district under the supervision of those trained youths.

(7) This Conference is emphatically of opinion that total prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs should be made a fundamental article of the Swaraj constitution for India and calls upon the leaders of the people to undertake intensive propaganda throughout the country to stop drink evil.

The Conference also expressed sympathy for the famine stricken people in some thanas in the district of Dinajpur and appealed to countrymen for funds for their help.

National Week in Bengal

Before the proceedings of the Conference were concluded, Sj. Subhashchandra Bose made a statement that as three days of the National week was spent in this Conference he proposed that National Week celebrations in Bengal will begin from Friday, April 13 and will last upto Thursday, April 19.

The week, Sj. Bose said, will be devoted by enlisting Congress members, propagation of Khadi, boycott of British goods and educating the masses for curtailment of jute cultivation.

The Chairman of the Reception Committee then thanked the President, Delegates, Visitors and Volunteers for their wholehearted co-operation for the success of the Conference and Messers Martin and Co., for making special train arrangements for the convenience of the people.

The President, Sj. J. M. Sen Gupta concluding the deliberations of the Conference congratulating the delegates on their successfully carrying the business of the session to a close. He also congratulated the Basirhat people and also Congress authorities and volunteers on their making excellent arrangement for the comforts of their guests. He said that not mere passing of resolutions would do. What was wanted was action. He had every confidence that

the people will work out the resolutions accepted by the Conference in true spirit.

From the deliberations of the Subjects Committee he was of opinion that, a charge had come on the people who were more eager for practical work. Referring to criticism that had been made that no new programme had been drawn up, he said, there was nothing new to be said on the problems before the country. They knew where they stood. India was under foreign rule. Their problem was how to get rid of it. There can be no two programme before the country—and the only programme which the Conference has put before the people was the political salvation of India.

How to achieve the goal?—To this the President said that their first work was to carry out effective and complete boycott of British goods and the Simon Commission. To bring out boycott of Simon Commission the draft constitution drawn up by the All-Parties' Conference was the only one as it would bring all the parties of the country within one unit despite their different political opinion:

The constitution would make India united and a small fraction of the people who until now co-operated with the Commission would come back and join the boycott.

He was sorry to find that Basanta Babu, with

whom he had worked for a long time, entertained a different opinion on the subject. He was however confident that Basanta Babu would soon realise the high and noble spirit with which the constitution was drafted.

The Conference ended at 8 p. m.

The next Conference will be held at Rangpur.

Some Relevant Information about the Conference.

1

Executive Committee of Reception Committee

A meeting of the Reception Committee of the Bengal Provincial Conference was held on Sunday, the 19th February, at Basirhat. About 100 members of the Reception Committee were present. Moulavi Mujibur Rahaman presided. The following resolutions were passed.

1. The Executive Committee of the Reception Committee of the Bengal Provincial Conference was formed with 61 members of whom one is President, 5 Vice-Presidents, 3 General Secretaries, 8 Departmental Secretaries, 2 Treasurers and 2 Store-keepers.
2. Eight members shall form a quorum.
3. Among the 61 members of the Executive Committee 30 were elected from Basirhat and the rest 31 will be elected from the four other Sub-Divisions.

Rai Harendranath Choudhuri, M. A., B. L., M. L. C., President, Reception Committee, Vice-Presidents—Maulana Mahammad Akram Khan, Sj. Radhikaprasanna Chaudhury, and three others to be elected hereafter. General Secretaries—Sjt. Prafullanath Banerjee, Suryakanta Misra, Jatindranath Ghosal. Departmental Secretaries—Sjts. Rupendranath Upadhyaya, Saratchandra Biswas, Nirodchandra Mukherjee, Surendranath Mazumdar, Bhujangadhar Rai Choudhuri, Nanigopal Basu, Nagendranath Sastri, Sayed Mehdi Ali. Treasurers—Sjts. Jogeschandra Sen, Nripendranath Mazumdar. Stroe-keepers—Sjts. Charuchandra Sen, Ramrup Agarwala. Secretary, Publicity Department—Bhujangadhar Rai Choudhuri.

2

Executive Council formed.

In a general meeting of the Reception Committee held at 1 p. m. on Sunday the 4th March, in the Town Hall at Basirhat, the Executive Council of the Reception Committee was finally formed with 65 members in all. All the vacancies were filled up except that of one Vice-Chairman. Dr. Nalinimohan Bhattacharjee M. B., of Kantalpara and Pulinbehari Sawoo were elected Vice-Chairmen of the Reception Committee.

A meeting of the Executive Committee Council

was held at 3 p. m. on the same day and in the same place and budget estimate was passed. It was agreed that the construction of the pandal should begin at once in the fields adjoining the school compound. About four thousand people are likely to attend the Conference and the pandal should be so constructed as to accommodate the same number. Considering the present situation in Bengal it was expected that delegates in full number will come from every district.

Basirhat, (24-Parganas) 6. 3. 28	Prafullanath Banerjee Jitendranath Ghosal Surjyakanta Misra General Secretaries, Reception Committee, B. P. Conference.
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3

Reception Committee Meeting

A meeting of the Reception Committee will be held at Basirhat Town Hall on Sunday the 18th March, 1928 at 4 p. m. to consider the final nominations of the Presidentship from the District Congress Committees of Bengal. Members are requested to attend.

A meeting of the Executive Council of the

Reception Committee will be held at 5 p. m. on the same day and at the same place.

Agenda :

1. Finance.
2. Miscellaneous.

Prafullanath Banerjee
Surjyakanta Misra
Jitendranath Ghoshal
General Secretaries Reception
Committee

4

Returning Officers

In a meeting of the Executive Council of B. P. C. the following gentlemen have been elected as returning officers for electing delegates for the coming Bengal Provincial Conference :

- Burdwan—Sj. Jitendranath Mitra
- Birbhum—Sj. Abinaschandra Rai
- Bankura—Sj. Kamalkrishna Rai
- Burrabazar—Sj. Prabhu Dayal Himmatsingka
- Bogra—Sj. Lalitmohan Sanyal
- Barisal—Sj. Nirmalranjan Das Gupta
- Chittagong—Sj. Tripuracharan Chaudhury
- Cachhar—Sj. Satyendramohan Deb.
- Central Calcutta—Dr. Bidhanchandra Rai
- Dinajpur—Sj. Jogendracandra Chakravarty

Darjeeling—Sj. Dr. Kumudsankar Rai
 Dacca—Sj. Mahendrakumar Ghosh
 Hooghly—Sj. Gaurhari Shome.
 Howrah—Sj. Khagendranath Ganguly
 Faridpur—Sj. Saratchandra Rai Chaudhuri
 Jessore—Sj. Bijoykrishna Rai
 Jalpaiguri—Sj. Pritinidhan Rai
 Khulna—Sj. Nanigopal Rai
 Midnapore—Sj. Kumar Debendralal Khan
 Mursidabad—Sj. Brajabhushan Gupta
 Maldah—Sj. Swami Baladevananda Giri
 Mymensingh—Sj. Jnanendrachandra Mazumdar
 North Calcutta—Sj. Rajendrachandra Deb
 Nadia—Sj. Indubhushan Bhaduri
 Noakhali—Sj. Khitischandra Rai Chaudhury
 24-Parganas—Sj. Prafullanath Banerjee
 Pabna—Sj. Jogendranath Moitra
 Rajshahi—Sj. Surendramohan Moitra
 Rangpur—Sj. Bijoynarayan Chaudhury
 Sylhet—Sj. Brojendranarain Chaudhury.
 Tippera—Sj. Kaminikumar Datta

Calcutta, Kiransankar Roy,
 11. 2. 28 Secretary,
 116, Bowbazar St. Bengal Provincial Congress
Committee

Presidency of Basirhat Conference.

The coming session of the Bengal Provincial Conference will be held in the district of 24-Parganas at Basirhat on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of April next. The session is a very important one. Serious matters affecting the future of Bengal will be discussed and decisive steps are to be taken. Considering the present state of circumstances and the enthusiasm created throughout the province it is expected that delegates will attend in full number this year. Arrangements have already been begun for the construction of the Pandal with an accommodation of about four thousands. The meeting of the Reception Committee for the election of the President will be held to-day.

Prafullanath Banerjee
 Basirhat
 18. 3. 28

Jitendranath Ghoshal
 Surjyakanta Misra

Secretaries Reception Committee

Nomination of President

It is much to be regretted that out of 32 Districts in Bengal and Surma Valley, only 20 Districts have sent their final nomination for the Presidentship of the Bengal Provincial Conference to be held at

Basirhat, 24-Parganas. The Reception Committee meeting held yesterday the 18th instant for the final election of the President had therefore to be postponed. The following districts have not yet sent their final recommendation—Bankura, Barisal, Bogra, Burdwan, Cachhar, Chittagong, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Khulna, Mymensing, Nadia, Rajshahi. Secretaries of these districts are requested to attend to it without delay. All nominations must be sent to reach the undersigned on or before the 23rd instant. Nominations sent after that date will not be considered at all.

Prafullanath Banerjee

Basirhat

Jitendranath Ghoshal

19. 3. 28

Surjyakanta Misra

General Secretaries, Reception
Committee

7

Notice

Reception Committee Meeting

A meeting of the Reception Committee will be held at Basirhat, 24-Parganas at 5 p. m. on Saturday, the 24th instant to consider the nominations from the districts of Bengal for election of the President of the Bengal Provincial Conference and for election of the same.

Members are earnestly requested to attend.

Khadi Exhibition at Basirhat

The arrangements for the Bengal Provincial Conference are going on slowly. A huge pandal with an accommodation for about four thousands is being constructed. There will be a Khadi Exhibition and arrangements are also being made for it. Khadi producers of this province are requested hereby to inform the undersigned as to how much space they require. Arrangements will also be made for a "Charka" competition. Those who want to enlist themselves for the above competition are requested to inform the office at least a week beforehand. The time and date for it will be announced hereafter. It is expected that a few prizes and medals will be announced.

The session of the Conference is expected to be a very important one, as important resolutions are likely to be passed and decisive steps to be taken to ensure the forward march of the people of this province. Leaders from other provinces are expected to join this Conference. We hope delegates from the districts of Bengal will come in large numbers and join this session in order to make it successful.

Basirhat
(24-Parganas)

21. 3. 28

Bhujangadhar Roy Chaudhury
Secretary.

Publicity Department.

Reception Committee's Appeal.

This year the Bengal Provincial Conference is going to be held at Basirhat, a small town on the bank of river Ichhamati. Much enthusiasm is being noticed among the members of all communities. Even hundreds of agriculturists of Sundarbans have become members of the Reception Committee of their own free will. A huge pandal which will accommodate about 1000 delegates and visitors has been erected on the vast field adjoining the school ground. It has four gates of entrance with different sitting arrangements for ladies, leaders, delegates, visitors and members of Reception Committee within it. The enthusiasm which was noticed only among the members of the middle classes, is now being noticed among the members of all classes and communities. The attempt to spread Swadeshi with the help of lantern lectures has thus been very successful in distant villages and their residents are all now bent in making the coming session of the Provincial Conference a success through their enthusiasm and co-operation. Even the illiterate agriculturists who did not know what Congress and Conference were, are now eager to make it a success with all their resources in men and money.

Important resolutions such as boycott of British

goods, removal of untouchability, Hindu-Muslem Unity and such other resolutions are going to be moved in the coming session of the Conference. So, we hope, the different districts of Bengal will not fail to send full number of delegates to this small town, which is at a distance of 36 miles from Calcutta with train and bus connection and a journey of two hours only by bus and taxi, to make the coming session a success.

Basirhat has become eager to receive the All-India leaders. Will they be able to remain aloof without fulfilling its desire.

A Khadi exhibition will be opened in the Pandal. The members of the Simla Byayam Samity of Calcutta will display their tricks in lathi, sword etc. The world famous Gobar Babu will grace the occasion with his visit. The sessions of the All-Bengal Bankers' Federation, the local Hindu Sava etc. are all going to be held on the occasion along with the Bengal Provincial Conference. This year the Conference has been invited here on behalf of the 24-Parganas District. So, we hope the residents of other sub-divisions of 24-Parganas will come forward with enthusiasm to help the Reception Committee with men and money, which they have failed to do even to the date to its full extent and make the

coming session of the Conference more than a success.

Jitendranath Ghoshal L. M. S.

General Secretary.

Nripendranath Majumdar M. A., B. L.
Treasurer.

10

B. P. C. C. Notice.

The members of the B. P. C. C. and the District Congress Committees willing to send resolutions for the ensuing Bengal Provincial Conference to be held at Basirhat (24-Parganas) are requested to forward them by the 27th March 1928 to the undersigned and they are further requested to frame the resolutions in Bengalee.

Kiransankar Roy,

116, Bowbazar Street

Secretary.

Cal. 23. 3. 1928.

Bengal Provincial Congress

Committee.

11

Reception Committee

The huge pandal which is on the way of being erected is nearing completion. Thousands of people from neighbouring villages are coming daily to have a sight of it. Much enthusiasm is being noticed among people of all shades of opinion and communities.

The Reception Committee are taking steps to sink tube-wells which will supply water to the delegates and visitors in the pandal assembled at the time of the Conference. Many All-India leaders from other provinces are expected to attend it. As Mr. Sen Gupta, our beloved leader has been elected President and as important and decisive resolutions are going to be moved in the coming session, it is hoped that delegates in full number will not fail to attend it. Hundreds of young men have offered themselves to serve as Volunteers to make the present session of the Conference a tremendous success.

Jitendranath Ghoshal

General Secretary

Nripendranath Majumdar

Treasurer.

12

24-Parganas Session at Basirhat

Secretaries of all the District Congress Committees are requested to grant certificates to the delegates elected from their districts in the following form. No printed certificates will be sent from the office of the Reception Committee.

Prafullachandra Banerjee

165, Baithak-khana Road

Secretary,

Room No. 14.

Reception Committee,

28. 3. 28

Bengal Provincial Conference

Form

I certify that Sj. has been duly elected as delegate from our district, to the coming session of the Bengal Provincial Conference to be held at Basirhat (24-Parganas).

Secretary District Congress Committee.

Date 1928.

13

Sj. Sen Gupta to Preside.

It has already been announced that Sj. J. M. Sen Gupta has been elected President of this session and it is expected that under his able guidance Bengal will be able to take decisive and forward steps.

The Conference will be held at Basirhat (24-Parganas) on the 7th and 8th April next. The town of Basirhat is about fourty miles off from Calcutta and is situated on the banks of the Ichhamatee river and is easily accessible by Bus or Railway. The Shambazar Railway Station from which trains start for Basirhat is just in front of the Belgachia Tram Depot. Buses also start from the same place, and are available almost every hour, throughout the day. Every possible arrangements are being made for the comforts of the delegates.

Delegates are requested to come with their beddings and mosquito-nets.

Bhujangadhar Roy Chaudhury,
Basirhat (24-Parganas) Publicity Secretary

28th March, 1928.

14

Life of Sj. J. M. Sen Gupta,
President of Provincial Conference
(Published in 'Forward' on 7. 4. 28)

Sj. J. M. Sen Gupta, son of late Jatramohan Sen Gupta, a revered leader of Bengal of the last generation, was born in the village of Barama in Chittagong in the year 1885 and educated in Calcutta Brahmo Boys' and Girls' School, Chittagong Collegiate School, Hare School and Presidency College. In August 1904 he started for England and joined Downing College, Cambridge. In 1907 he passed the Law Tripos Examination Part I, in 1908 he graduated as B. A. and in 1909 he passed the Law Tripos Examination Part II and got his L. LB. degree. He was a member of Gray's Inn and was called to the Bar in June, 1909. It was in this last year that he married an English lady by the name of Miss Nellie Gray, who has since been a worthy companion to him.

He represented Downing College in Lawn Tennis

and Cricket and has also taken part in the Bengal Lawn Tennis Championship in Calcutta. He still plays tennis and sometimes cricket.

While in England he was President of the Cambridge "Indians Majlis" and "The East and West Society."

On coming back to India in December 1909, he enrolled himself as an advocate in the Calcutta High Court in 1910 and has been now for some years a leader of the Calcutta Criminal Bar. Among other big cases he was engaged in the well-known Bawla Murder case of Bombay.

Political Life

He began to take a prominent part in the political life of his country from 1910. He attended the Bengal Provincial Conference at Faridpur in 1911 and invited the next session of the Conference to Chittagong. His father late Babu Jatramohan Sen Gupta was the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Bengal Provincial Conference at Chittagong in 1912. The Bengal Provincial Conference was held a second time in Chittagong in 1922. Mr. Sen Gupta was then elected Chairman of the Reception Committee. Caught in the swing of Non-co-operation in March 1921, he suspended his practice at a time when after years of hard struggle

he had just succeeded in making his mark in the profession. It was not a small sacrifice which Sj. Sen-Gupta made to serve his country. His intimate friends know the extent of the hardships and privations which he and his wife and children suffered—most readily and gladly—during the eighteen months he was out of the profession. The work that Sj. Sen-Gupta did during these months, though well-known to the public, will bear recapitulations.

In April 1921, he organised and led the strike of the employees of Burma Oil Company in Chittagong. A notice was served on him by the Magistrate directing him to refrain from holding public meetings or leading processions. He refused to obey the order and was arrested. The result was a complete dislocation of business in Chittagong followed by an amicable settlement of the strike. On the 28th of May, 1921, Sj. Sen Gupta led and organised another strike which spread from Gaubati and Lumding to Chittagong and in which 14,000 employees of the Assam-Bengal Railway were involved. In the course of this strike which lasted for over three months he had to borrow Rs 40,000 on his own responsibility and was arrested on the 4th of July and passed two or three days in "hazut." On October 20, Sj. Sen Gupta with seventeen others was sentenced to three months' rigorous imprisonment for having led a

procession in Chittagong without a license from the Police. After release from prison Sj. Sen Gupta refused to go back to the Bar for months and subsequently rejoined it under the pressure of extreme necessity.

Congress Activities

He was a member of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress in 1922-23, and when late Deshabandhu launched the Swarajya Party, he joined it as one of his doughty Lieutenants and became the Secretary of the Bengal Swarajya Council Party. The first business of the new Bengal Legislative Council, was started by Sj. Sen Gupta moving important resolutions of the release of political prisoners and refusal of demands that were carried by an overwhelming majority.

When the late Deshabandhu was spending a little time at Patna with his brother for recuperating his health, Lord Lytton, the then Governor of Bengal invited Sj. J. M. Sen Gupta to discuss some important matters at the Government House.

After Deshabandhu's demise his mantle fell on Sj. J. M. Sen Gupta who worthily filled the Mayor's chair of the Calcutta Corporation thrice even to the admiration of his political enemies and led the party to victory on many occasion scoring 97 per cent. of

the votes in the last General election at Chittagong. He received an address of welcome from Cawnpore Municipality on the occasion of his attending the Cawnpore session of the Indian National Congress and received another from the Madras Corporation when he attended the recent session of the Congress, where he had the unique honour of hoisting the Indian National Flag. The South African Indian National Congress invited him to preside over their deliberations, which honour he declined on account of heavy pre-occupations here. Owing to some personal reasons he declined to stand as a candidate for the Presidentship of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee for the third time. Sj. Sen Gupta had the honour being invited last year to attend the tenth anniversary of Soviet Russia Intellectual Co-operation League. Last though not the least in the greater interest of rescuing minor girls he was not slow to extend the hand of co-operation of Sir Stanley Jackson, Governor of Bengal, in raising the Mayor's fund.

No notice of Sj. Sen Gupta's life will be complete without a reference to the part played in the National struggle by his wife, who though an English lady has made the cause of her husband and her husband's countrymen her own and who in the absence of her husband, while in incarceration, took up his work

moving among the people dressed as one of themselves, and throwing herself heart and soul into the great struggle.

14

To Present Address.

At a meeting of the Local Board held on 30th March at the Board office, members unanimously resolved to present addresses of welcome to Sj. J. M. Sen Gupta, President elect of the Bengal Provincial Conference, Sj. Subhashchandra Bose, President, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and other distinguished leaders who visit Basirhat at the time of the Conference.

The members of the Local Jubak Samity have also passed a similar resolution at a meeting of their executive committee held the same day.

15

Notice

An ordinary meeting of the Reception Committee will be held at Basirhat Town Hall on Friday the 6th April, at 2 p. m. Members are requested to attend.

Agenda :

1. To prepare Draft resolutions to be submitted before the subjects committee.
2. Miscellaneous.

16

Programme of Conference

7th April, Saturday—

7-30 a. m.—Opening of the Khadi Exhibition.

9 a. m.—Hoisting of the National Flag.

2 p. m. to 5 p. m.—Bengal Provincial Conference.

7 p. m. to 10 p. m.—Subjects Committee.

8th April, Sunday—

7-30 a. m. to 10-30 a.m.—Subjects Committee.

1 p. m.—Bengal Provincial Conference.

9th April, Monday—

8 to 10 a. m.—Charka Competition.

4 to 6 p. m.—Physical Feats.

17

An Editorial Note of 'Forward' on 4. 4. 28.

Arrangements for holding the session of the Bengal Provincial Conference at Basirhat are now practically complete and it is confidently expected that delegates from all the districts will muster strong to take part in its deliberations. During the last two years systematic attempts were made to create splits inside the ranks of congressmen in Bengal and much of the energy which might have been utilised to further the nationalist cause had to be spent in overcoming the difficulties so created. The monster of communalism which the genius of Desabandhu

Das had done so much to bring under control reared its head after his death and, fostered and encouraged by the alien bureaucracy, did its level best to weaken the hold of the Congress over the masses of our countrymen. This, coupled with the deportation of prominent Congress workers under the Bengal Ordinance had tended to cast a gloom over Congressmen in Bengal and it was mainly on these accounts that the Krishnanagore and Maju sessions of the Conference did not create the amount of enthusiasm that they might have done under happier circumstances. Things have fortunately improved since then and in Bengal at any rate, we have left behind the worst days of communalism. The atmosphere has cleared considerably and the release of Sj. Subhashchandra Bose and some of his comrades has infused a new hope and a new life into the Congress organisation in Bengal. The old difficulties have been surmounted to a considerable extent, and it may reasonably be expected that the delegates assembled at the Basirhat Conference will enter on their duties with fresh minds and energy and seriously tackle the problems with which the country is faced at present.

The main questions that will come up for discussion will naturally be in connection with the boycott of British cloth and of the Simon

Commission, and the delegates will be called upon to find out the ways and means which will help to give practical effect to these resolutions of the Madras Congress. It is an open secret that the bureaucracy, with the support of the reactionary and anti-national elements in the country are trying their level best to break the new spirit that has manifested itself in the country. It will be the duty of Congressmen therefore, not only, to strengthen existing Congress organisations in the country but to establish new centres of resistance to successfully fight the forces of reaction. This time has gone by when we might remain satisfied with the maintenance of the '*Status quo*'. A determined effort will have to be made to bring the masses of our countrymen within the Congress fold, and by organising them on the basis of their grievances, to create and foster the fighting spirit which will crown them with victory. The country looks upon the younger generation to take the leading part in this struggle for freedom and expects them to take part in the deliberations of the Basirhat Conference to settle their future programme and line of action.

An Editorial Note of 'The Amrita Bazar Patrika' on 6.4.28.

Basirhat to Answer

The Bengal Provincial Conference meets this year (to-morrow and day after to-morrow) immediately after a serious disaster suffered by the Congress Party in the Corporation of Calcutta. The defeat of the "no-confidence" motion in the Bengal Legislative Council was bad enough, but those sustained at the Mayoral election and the election of the Committees of the Corporation have given a severe blow to the prestige of the Congress. Yet human experience has shown that defeat has a value no less than victory. And human nature is such that an uninterrupted succession of the one or the other has a demoralising effect. To keep us fit, we need both. In this view we cannot think that the recent defeat of the Congress has been an unmitigated evil. These defeats will not go in vain if they chasten the minds of our leaders and make them fit for introspection which is impossible in the intoxication of triumph after triumph. We hope the deliberations of the Provincial Conference will bear on them the stamp of sobriety.

Why has the Congress Party suffered these defeats? Last year the Mayoral election just escaped

a defeat due to the personality, of Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta. We believe with him that this time even his candidature could not have made any difference. The Moslem section of the Corporation was not satisfied that the Pact the Congress Party had made with them had been fulfilled to the letter. This time they could not trust even Mr. Subhashchandra Bose who, during his period of office as the head of the Corporation Executive gave more jobs to Moslems than their population or contribution in rates warranted and in several instances at the sacrifice of efficiency. The Moslem Councillors have apparently decided this time to give a chance to the Non-Swarajist coalition. This coalition has begun well, for the lion's share in the committees has gone to the small minority that had turned the scale in favour of it. It remains to be seen how this process will end.

One thing is perfectly clear. The debacle of the Congress Party in the Corporation and the Legislative Council is directly traceable to the abandonment of the principle of Nationalism and substitution for it a system of bribery. "Give us votes and we shall give you jobs"—this has been the policy. It is the fashion now-a-days to decry the old politics. We do not hold any brief for that politics. This paper claims to have done its bit to crush what is known as

Moderate Politics. But we confess that even the old politics was better than the politics of bribery we have on. When Lokemanya Tilak, Motilal Ghosh, Aurobindo Ghosh and others broke away from the old politics, they did so to make politics more virile but not less honest. They took their stand on sturdy Nationalism. They did not dream that they were only paving the way for the destruction of Nationalism and substitution for it of Communalism of the most rabid and shameless character. Even at the risk of unpopularity this *Patrika* has strongly protested against this degeneration and the whole country now sees the effect of that fatal policy.

It is forgotten that two persons may play at the same game. The bureaucracy has taken the leaf out of our politicians and is buying votes for jobs. The Anti-Congress Parties are doing the same thing. The Congress Party now find, as they should have anticipated, that they have been paid back in their own coin. The politics of to-day is a Veritable Scramble for job, paid or unpaid.

But where do the masses, Hindus or Moslems, come in this job-hunting politics ? Nowhere. They are where they are. The politician offers them lip sympathy but goes on his own way to grind his own axe. To-day Congress Organisations do not work among the masses. They are used for a

different purpose. The result is that the so-called Hindu-Moslem quarrel is really a quarrel between politicians who use the ignorant masses to prosecute their own quarrels to a successful end. Had there been organisations in close touch with the masses, working among them and to their benefit, the politicians would have found it very difficult to make pawns of the masses in their game. But their being no such organisations, the politicians had the coast clear before them.

Is it possible to take back politics to the old mooring of Nationalism? Is the mischief done beyond repair? We do not know, we can only hope that it is not yet too late. Can the Provincial Conference at Basirhat take courage in both hands and give mandate that the Congress Organisations are henceforth to confine their activities mainly, if not wholly, to work among the masses?

The Council programme has failed. Even Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar has admitted it. The Government has been more boldly reactionary than it was even in the days of Moderatism. Public opinion is trampled under foot with a cynicism the like of which has seldom been seen. The bureaucracy has found our weakness and is not afraid of challenging us to do our worst.

This being the situation, shall we be content to

continue to plough the sand ? Let the Basirhat Conference answer.

They saw there is no money. There are few workers. They forget that money is not forthcoming and workers have left because there is nothing in the programme that is being worked. That programme has exhausted itself. Nothing more can be got out of it. That programme may continue to be a subsidiary programme but for strength it must draw upon the organisation working among the masses. Once confidence is restored, money will come, men will come. The soil of Bengal is yet capable of producing a rich crop. But if tares only are sown, what can we expect but disappointment ?

19

Bengal Provincial Conference sitting to-day.

The Bengal Provincial Conference will hold its sittings on the 7th and 8th April this year at Basirhat (24, Parganas) under the Presidency of Sj. Jatindra-mohan Sen Gupta. A huge and nice pandal with accomodation for more than four thousand people has been erected. There will be an exhibition compound attached to the Pandal with 8 or 10 Khadi Stalls. There will be a "Charka" competition on the morning of the 9th April. Acharya Prafullachandra

Roy is expected to preside and Sj. Gopalacharia, Seth Jamunalal Bajaj and several other members of the All-India Spinners' Association will be present there. Some medals and prizes are likely to be announced. We hope spinners from different districts of Bengal will attend the competition.

Means of Communication.

This town of Basirhat is about forty miles off from Calcutta and is easily accessible by buses or the Barasat-Basirhat Light Railway. There is a regular bus service and altogether about 25 buses run every day going not less than four trips each. Arrangements are being made for running additional buses on the 7th morning. They will be available near the Belgachia Tram Dept. almost every half-an-hour from about 5-30 a. m. to 7 p. m. The timings of the Light Railway as altered from the first of April is given below. We are trying for a Special Train also at 9-30 a. m. to reach Basirhat before 12 noon.

Delegates arriving at Calcutta on the morning of the 7th April are requested to start immediately for Belgachia Tram Depot to avail themselves of these buses or train so that they may reach Basirhat before noon. The sitting of the Conference on the first day will be held at 2. p. m.

	Daily	Daily
Shambazar Dept.	6-28	9-49.
Beleghata Bridge Dept.	8-31	11-44
Basirhat Kachary Arr.	10-27	13-45
(Except Sundays and Court Holidays.)		
Barasat Dept.	7-46	10-48
Beleghata Arr.	8-30	11-35
Basirhat Kachari	Dept.	16-50
Beleghata Bridge	arr.	18-53
Shambazar	arr.	20-48

Prafullanath Banerjee
 Jitendranath Ghoshal
 Surjyakanta Misra

Secretaries Reception Committee,
 Basirhat

20

Special Train for Delegates.

Sj. Lalmohan Ghosh, Asst. Secretary B. P. C. C.
 notifies :

On Saturday, the 7th instant an Up Special Train for the Delegates of the Conference will leave between 8 and 8-30 a. m. in the morning and the Down Special will leave Basirhat Kachari between 6 and 6-30 p. m. in the evening. The Special return tickets will be issued to the delegates who will

travel by these Specials at single fare on production of certificates duly signed by the Chairman or Secretary of the Reception Committee.

21

Election of Delegates

From Barisal

The following gentlemen have been duly elected as delegates to the Bengal Provincial Conference at 'Basirbat' from Backergunge :

Sjs. Rajanikanta Chatterjee, Bijoybhushan Das Gupta, Amiyakumar Roy Choudhury, Manmathanath De, Saileswar Chakravarti, Manoranjan Bose, Pyarilal Roy, Jitendranath Mukherjee, Asutosh Mahalanobis, Jagadis Chatterjee, Anantaprasad Sen, Nibarauchandra Ghosh, Jogeschandra Das Gupta, Ganapati Banerjee, Khirodchandra Datta, Hirendrabhushan Das Gupta, Kasiswar Chakravarty, Kalibar Datta, Jogendranath De, Satyaranjan Das Gupta, Jitendranath Kar Gupta, Sachindranath Kar Gupta, Sureshcandra Ganguly, Mahendrachandra Roy, Manohar Mukherjee, Niranjan Mukherjee, Upendranath Gupta, Khagendranath Ganguly, Amalkishna Sarkar, Santoshini Das Gupta, Kesabchandra Banerjee, Biseswar Acharjee, Pulinbehari Guha Thakurta, Kshitischandra Sen, Sailendranath Das Gupta, Barodaprasad Bhowmick, Sisirkumar Das Gupta.

Birendranath Sen Gupta, Ramapada Chatterjee, Sukhamaya Basu Chaudhury, Lalmohan Sen, Saral-kumar Datta.

N. B.—All members of B. P. C. are the Ex-officio delegates to the B. P. C.

Nirmalranjan Das Gupta
Returning Officer,
Barisal.

From Barabazar.

The following have been duly elected as delegates to the Bengal Provincial Conference at Basirhat (24-Parganas) from Barabazar District Congress Constituency :

Sjs. Madangopal Josi, Kumarkishna Kumar, Ram Dahin Ojha, Jagadis Narayan Tewari, Rajendra Prasad Singh, Raj Ban Sukla, Jagadamba Prasad Singh, Madan Lal Misra, Sambhunath Misra, Jasoda Nandan Misra, Bakalal Khatri, Siva Prasad Pande, Ram Nagina Singh, Badri Prasad Pande, Ram Kumar Bhualka, Manilal Jain, Phatra Chand Nainati, Chirinji Lal, Sriram Dobe, Ram Abatar Sing, Janaki Singh, Bhola Singh, Bhola Nath Burman, Himangsu Sen, Manik Lal.

P. D. Himmat Sinka
R. O. of Barabazar District
Congress Constituency.

From Basirhat

Delegates from Reception Committee.

At a meeting held at Basirhat Town Hall on 21st March, 1928, the following gentlemen have been duly elected as delegates to the Basirhat Conference from the Reception Committee Constituency :

Sjts. Charuchandra Sen, Thakurdas Ghosh, Jatindranath Ghoshal, Bhujangadhar Roychoudhury, Lalitmohan Bose, Nirodchandra Mukherjee, Nangopal Bose, Bidhubhushan Haldar, Radhikaprasanna Chakravarty, Mohinimohan Sen, Rupendranath Upadhyaya, Md. Sakibayatulla, Sjts. Sudhirendranath Mazumdar, Bibhutidhar Roychoudhury, Moulavi Samsul Haq, Sjts. Nagendranath Santra, Saratchandra Biswas, Nripendranath Mazumdar, Satischandra Chakravarty, Dr. Nalinimohan Bhattacharjee, Sjts. Pulinbehari Sawoo, Jogeschandra Sen, Byomkesh Chatterjee, Anukulchandra Das, Satkari Banerjee, Saratchandra Ghosh, Joykrishna Bhattacharjee, Harihar Bhattacharjee, Biseswar Bhattacharjee, Durgadas Banerjee, Phanibhushan Bose, Kalicharan Ghosh, Nareschandra Das Gupta, Lakshmikanto Pramanik, Prafullachandra Mitra, Sachindranath Das, Panchanan Mitra, Bibhtibhushan Bose, Jnanendranath Mitra, Nirmalkumar Bose, Satyendranath Ghosh, Satkari Datta, Kalicharan Sukla, Girindranath Banerjee, Jitendranath Bose,

Hemendralal Roy, Jotishchandra Chakravarti,
 Surjyakanto Misra, Md. Sadatulla, Md. Ainul Haq
 Khan.

Radhikaprasanna Chakravarty
 Returning Officer,
 Empowered by,
 Rai Harendra Nath Chowdhury.

From Birbhum

The following gentlemen have been duly elected
 as delegates to the Bengal Provincial Conference
 at Basirhat from the Birbhum Congress Constituency:

Sjts. Abinaschandra Roy, Sanatan Sen, Manilal
 Ghosh, Jowalaprasad Saha, Satindramohan Kar,
 Jagadischandra Ghose, Bidhubhushan Das, Dr.
 Saratchandra Mukherjee, Sjts. Asutosh Chakravarty,
 Saratsasi Banerjee, Radharaman De, Haridas Sinha,
 Satipada Chakravarti all are of of Suri, Sudhirchandra
 Roy of Mollarpur, Brajajana Ballabh Bose of
 Bolpur, Kartickchandra Sarkar of Suri, Dr.
 Debendranath Sarkar of Surul, Kalipada Roy of Hat
 Serandi, Sivaprasad Saha of Sainthia, Syamapada
 Ghosh of Sainthia, Radhapada Sen Gupta of Suri,
 P. O. & Village Lambodarpur.

Satindramohan Kar
 Returning Officer-in-Charge
 Birbhum District Congress
 Committee.

From Dacca

The following are the list of delegates to the Bengal Provincial Conference at Basirhat for the year 1928 from the Dacca District Congress Constituency :

Sjts. Rajanikanta Das, Jnanendramohan Ghosh, Atulananda Guha, Jogendranath Bhattacharjee, Madanmohan Bhowmik, Mohinimohan Das, Nalinikanta Ghosh, Md. A. S. Golam Gilani, Sjts. Probodh-kumar Roy, Manindranath Bhattacharjee, Satindranath Roy, Jaminimohan Pal, Gopalchandra Gupta, Kshitischandra Mazumdar, Narendraprasad Bose, Umeschandra Datta, Manoranjan Banerjee, Debendranath Sen, Haripada Chatterjee, Premranjan Sen, Manindrachandra Datta, Sudhindrachandra Mazumdar, Umananda Datta, Atulchandra Sen, Nripendrachandra Bose, Md. A. K. Golam Jilani, Miss Arubala Sen Gupta, Sjts. Sasankamohan Das Gupta, Nisikanta Das Gupta, Kshitischandra Bose, Md. Golam Mahamed Choudhury, Md. Golam Kader Choudhury, Sjts. Sureschandra Chatterjee, Jitendranath Kusari, Nalinikisore Guha, Ganendrachandra Bhattacharjee, Nalinikanta Roy, Brajendrachandra Das, Indubhusan Bose, Asitnath Bhattacharjee, Mahendrachandra De, Tamohar Das Gupta, Birendrachandra Bhattacharjee, Amulyachandra Chakravarty, Satischandra Chakravarty, Anukulchandra Chau-

dhury, Prafullaranjan Raha, Makhamal Dhar, Kiranchandra Chakravarty, Manindrachandra Dhar, Mlv. Mahoboob Ali Khan Majlish, Md. Samsul Huda.

Madanmohan Bhowmik
Asst. Secretary, D. D. C. C.
43, Sutropur Road, Dacca

From Faridpur.

The following gentlemen have been elected as delegates from Faridpur District Congress Committee to the session of the Bengal Provincial Conference at Basirhat.

Sjts. Bimanchandra Chakravarty, Bankimchandra Ganguly, Bibhutikumar Datta, Bijoykumar Banerjee, Bisweswar Maulik, Birendrachandra Bhaumik Chaudhury, Md. Rasanali, Sjts. Chunilal Bose, Dineschandra Sen, Debendrachandra Ghatak, Dineschandra Roy, Girindranath Roychaudhury, Girindranath Roychaudhury (Madaripur), Harendrachandra Rakshit, Hemantalal Sen Gupta, Jatindramohan Ghosh, Jatindrachandra Bhattacharjee, Jadunath Pal, Jibnalal Sarkar, Jogendranath Roy, Kaliprasad Banerjee, Kalipada Roychaudhury, Md. Kafiluddin Khondakar, Sjts. Kiranchandra Roy, Manomohan Bhattacharjee, Manmathanath Sen Gupta, Mathurana Nath Maitra, Nikhileshchandra Guba

Roy, Nagendranath Ghosh, Nagendranath Bhattacharjee, Prafullachandra Chaudhury, Probodhchandra Chatterjee, Prafullakumar Chatterjee, Panchanan Chakravarty, Prithwischandra Roy Chaudhury, Priyanath Bose, Promathanath Sarkar, Purnachandra Das, Purnachandra Karmakar, Rameschandra Roy Chaudhury, Rameschandra Roy, Ramaprasad Ganguly, Ramanimohan Bose-Mazumdar, Satischandra Roy Chaudhury, Sureschandra Mahalanabis, Sudhirranjan Roy Chaudhury, Surendramohan Saha, Surendranath Moitra, Santoshkumar Datta, Surendranath Saha, Shah Md. Jonabali, Sjts. Sasibhushan Bose, Surendranath Biswas, Suryakumar Mitra Barman, Surendrakumar Sen, Nikhil Guba Roy, Md. Tasiruddin.

29. 3. 29.

Saratchandra Roy Chaudhury

Returning Officer

From North Calcutta

The following gentlemen have been duly elected delegates to the session of the Bengal Provincial Conference at Basirhat from the North Calcutta Congress Constituency.

Sjts. Bhupendranarayan Sen, Bhabendranath Dey, Benoybhushan Datta, Bankimchandra Sett, Debendranath Kundu, Gosthabehari Sett, Gosthabehari Pal, Hrishikes Sinha, Jnanendranath Bose, Kalicharan

Pal, Mukundakumar Ghosh, Mukundakumar Sen, Nripendranath Mazumdar, Nikhileschandra Sen, Nandalal Ghosh, Panchanan Bose, Pramathanath Chatterjee, Probhatchandra Ganguly, Ramchandra Sett, Sureschandra Sen, Sasikumar Pal, Srischandra Das Gupta, Satyendranath Ghoshal, Trilochan Sinha, Upendranath Datta.

Rajendrachandra Deb
Returning Officer.

From Rajshahi

The following gentlemen have been elected delegates from the Rajshahi District Congress Committee to the Bengal Provincial Conference at Basirhat.

Sjts. Saratkumar Ghosh, Dinabandhu Sarkar, Nirmalkumar Roy, Sankaracharya Mitra, Hridaynath Kar, Sachindrakumar Mitra, Prafullachandra Sarkar, Apurbakumar Das Gupta, Sudhirkumar Chatterjee, Gopaldatta Lahiry, Satyanarayan Chaudhury, Rajani-mohan Sanyal, Purnananda Roy, Biswananda Roy, Satyendrakumar Chaudhury, Nirendranath Datta, Amalendu Bagchi, Pravatkumar Sanyal, Surendra-nath Baksi, Mohitkumar Moitra, Suprakas Chakravarty, Bidhubhushan Sarkar, Nirmalkumar Roy, Dwijendranath Das, Herambanath Bhattcharjee, Sureschandra Goswami, Satyendramohan Mitra.

From South Calcutta

Sj. S. N. Haldar, the Returning Officer for South Calcutta Constituency has declared the following gentlemen to have been duly elected delegates to the Bengal Provincial Conference at Basirhat.

Sjts. Amalendu Das Gupta, Anandamay Paramanik, Atulchandra Bhattacharjee, Birendra-chandra Nag, Chittaranjan Bose, Jagadananda Moitra, Janardan Chakravarty, Mukundalal Ganguly, Provaschandra Bose, Rohinikumar Ganguly, Sailendranath Datta, Sarasinath Bose, Taraknath Chakravarty, Tincowrie Banerjee, W. M. Roy, Dr. Subodhkumar Basu, Dr. Surendranath Roy Chaudhury.

From Sylhet

The following gentlemen have been elected delegates to Basirhat Conference from Sylhet District Congress Committee :

Sjts. Atulchandra Bhattacharjee, Sylhet ; Kedarnath Bhattacharjee, Sylhet ; Sailendrachandra Biswas, Habiganj ; Basantakumar Das, Sylhet ; Kaliprasanna Das, Karimganj ; Rajanikanta Das, Sylhet ; Rabindra-mohan Das Gupta, Sylhet ; Aswinikumar Deb, Habiganj ; Bagalakumar Deb, Karimganj ; Kshirode-chandra Deb, Sylhet ; Satischandra Deb, Karimganj ; Akhilchandra Datta, Habiganj ; Charuchandra Datta,

Sylhet, Harendramohan Mazumdar, Sylhet, Anilkumar Roy, Karimganj ; Hemendrachandra Roy, Sylhet ; Ramanimohan Roy, Karimganj ; Subodhchandra Roy, Karimganj ; Pareslal Some, Sylhet ; Ramesranjan Some, Sylhet.

From Tippera

The following person have been elected as delegates to the session of the Bengal Provincial Conference at Basirhat.

Sjta. Hemaprabha Mazumdar, Mrinmayee Datta, Mrinalini Datta, Charubala Datta, Kiranbala Ghosh, Hemalata Datta, Sjts. Phanindramohan Nag, Basantakumar Majumdar, Kaminikumar Datta, Narendranath Datta, Nibaranchandra Ghosh, Akhilchandra Kar, Harendraranjan Chaudhury, Promodkumar Sen, Haladhar Das, Biprachandra Bhowmik, Md. Razi Abdul Lati Sjts. Maheschandra Sen, Gobindachandra Bhowmik, Brojendrachandra Rakshit, Maulavi Abdul Alim, Abdul Rahaman, Sjts. Jitendranath Datta, Debendrakumar Datta Chaudhury, Harendrakrishna Majumdar, Nisikanta Das, Swarnakamal Roy, Dhirendranath Datta, Saratchandra Chakravarty, Surendramohan Roy, Santoshchandra Chatterjee, Jnanendrakisore Roy, Ajitkumar Datta, Sarojkumar Datta, Sureschandra Chakravarty, Debendranath Datta, Susilkumar Majumdar, Maulavi

Asharafuddin Chaudhury, Maulavi Muklessur
Rahaman, Maulavi Asimuddin Ahmed.

Comilla

Kaminikumar Datta

28. 3. 28

Returning Officer.

From 24-Parganas

Following is a list of delegates elected from the members of the District of 24-Parganas.

Sjts. Abanikumar Chakravarty, Amulyaratan Chaudhury, Annadaprasad Chatterjee, Anukulchandra Mukherjee, Md. Abdur Razzak Khan, Md. Ali Ahammad, Sjts. Amarendramohan Banerjee, Amarnath Bhattacharjee, Anadinath Chatterjee, Bankimbehari Chatterjee, Bejoy Bhattacharjee, Benimadhab Chatterjee, Bholanath Biswas, Bibhutibhushan Bose, Birendrakumar Sen, Dharendranath Chakravarty, Dhireskumar Moitra, Gopendra Chakravarti, Gouricharan Sen-Gupta, Gouripada Bhattacharjee, Haribhushan Haldar, Haricharan Banerjee, Haricharan Bhattacharjee, Harihar Chatterjee, Jadunath Roy, Janakinath Mukherjee, Jatindranath Ghosh, Jibendrakumar Gupta, Jatindranath Biswas, Kalidas Bhattacharjee, Kantischandra Ganguly, Kshitischandra Das Gupta, Lalitmohan Biswas, Lalitmohan Ghosh, Lalmohan Banerjee, Mahadeb Mukherjee, Manimohan Mukherjee, Manindranath Ghosh,

Nabadwipchandra Das, Nagendranath Das, Nanigopal Basu Chaudhury, Nepalchandra De, Narendramohan Goswami, Nisikanta Sarkar, Nripendrachandra Banerjee, Nripendranath Mukherjee, Panchanan Mitra, Prakaschandra Sen Gupta, Pulinbehari Bose, Pulinbehari Mukherjee, Ramanimchan Banerjee, Sachindralal Mitra, Sachindranath Mukherjee, Sailendranath Ghosh, Sankariprosad Sen Sarma, Kaviraj Saratchandra Ghosh (Halisahar), Satischandra Das Gupta, Satyendranath Mitra, Sripati Bhattacharjee, Sudhirkumar Chakravarty, Surendranath Roy, Swarnakumar Ghoshal, Trilochan Sinha, Pannalal Kabyatirtha, Pannalal Mitra, Md. Suleman Khan.

165, Baithak-Khana Road, Prafullanath Banerjee
 Calcutta. Secy. Congress Committee.
 4. 4. 28 Dist. 24-Parganas

22

An Editorial Note of 'The Amrita Bazar Patrika'
 on 7. 4. 28.

Bardoli and Basirhat Conference.

We doubt if even one in a hundred of the people who will meet to-day at the Basirhat Conference has reflected over the situation that obtains at Bardoli at the present movement. Yet Bardoli has a

most inspiring lesson to convey to the whole country. At a time when our leaders show by their conduct that they believe in nothing but sensationalism in politics, Bardoli ought to set them furiously to think. The keen struggle in which the simple unlettered peasants of this taluka are engaged with the mighty British officialdom in India disregarding all consequences and with an undying faith in the justice of their cause ought to serve as a beacon-light to their educated countrymen who are toying with politics.

What is exactly the situation at Bardoli to-day ? The people, uneducated rural agriculturists prayed in vain to the Govt. for the redress of their grievances. Their simple request for even an impartial enquiry into the fairness or otherwise of the basis of the revenue settlement was disregarded. Extortionate and extremely unfair demands were made on them. At last being unable to obtain justice, these simple village folks took courage out of despair and acted as the indigo ryots of Nadia and Jessore acted when the latter came to realize that they would get no protection at the hands of the authorities from the oppression of indigo planters. "These hands will never cultivate indigo," said they, and they stuck to this vow. Similarly, the villagers of Bardoli have taken a vow that come what may, they will never willingly pay a

courts to the revenue officials. The Government of Bombay are trying to frighten them into submission. Their prestige is at stake. "A policy of frightfulness" to quote the words of Mahatma Gandhi is being systematically followed to break the *morale* of the opposition. They have selected seven prominent people out of the Satyagrahis and with a view to make an example of them, have served them with notice that if by the 12th April, they do not pay the new rate of assessment, their properties will be forfeited.

Has this produced any effect? Far from it. The Satyagrahis who have shed all fear of the Government have remained undaunted. In a letter to their leader Sj. Vallabhbhai Patel, they have declared their unflinching determination to stand firm and brave all consequences until their legitimate demands are met by the Government. The spirit animating these brave fighters will be evident from a story told by the Secretary of the Satyagraha Committee the other day. One of the recipients of the notice of forfeiture was an old lady, extremely poor. She was urged by her wavering nephew to give up the vow and to escape the wrath of the Government by paying the enhanced rent. What did she say in reply? "There shall be no going back," thundered the old lady, "my word weighs with me more than a piece of field. If I am

deprived of my land, I shall be able to fall back upon Mahatmaji's Charka and the jail can have no fear for one who is used to grind one's corn at home."

Here speaks the spirit of the fearless patriot anxious to bring about the salvation of her country through sacrifice and suffering. How we wish the same spirit had permitted and pervaded the words and activities of our political leaders. How we wish it had helped them shake off their lethargy and self-deception given a touch of reality to their political agitation.

Neither the leaders nor the rank and file to-day show, we regret to find, any disposition that they want to profit by this noble example of Bardoli. Practically their whole attention and energy has been diverted towards the Council futility. And here there is a remarkable discrepancy between their profession and practice. They declare in the most emphatic terms that the legislatures are a huge sham, a colossal fraud. Yet the whole of their political activities is directed in a way as to lead one to believe that these are the most real and the most important things in the scheme of the universe. And this is especially true of those who are guiding the Congress movement in Bengal. Their one obsession has been the Council. Wordy duels in the Council Chambers, paper victories, the exchange of verbal repartees,

these have wholly occupied their time and mind. And in the Council what has been the chief target of their attack ? The Ministry, an institution which has been long discredited and which people have long ceased to take seriously. What an unnecessary amount of energy they are spending to bring about its downfall and to what inordinate lengths they do not hesitate to descend for the attainment of this object ! Deceit, double-dealing, intrigue, corruption, pact, nothing appears too mean for those who are engaged in the pastime of ministry-breaking as if the fate of the freedom movement in Bengal were indispensably bound up with the issue as to whether one set of worthless Ministers will be replaced by another.

In the meantime, the Bureaucracy which was all the while laughing in its sleeves at this exhibition of curious mentality on our part has been retrenching itself more and more firmly in the country and Swaraj continually receding into the background. There has been a good deal of talk about Civil Disobedience, Mass Action, Passive Resistance and other heroic things. But neither the speakers nor the hearers have taken them seriously and Bengal has been passing through the same old monotony of moderate politics.

What is the way out of this hopeless situation to

salvation ? Bardoli points to it. The Basirhat Conference will be doing an inestimable service not only to Bengal but to the whole of India if it can persuade the country to abandon the wrong perspective and to realise the truth of the political situation. Let us hope it will succeed in inspiring the people with the example of Bardoli and divert national activity into a really useful channel.

23

An Editorial Note of 'Ananda Bazar Patrika'

on 7. 4. 28.

(Translated)

Basirhat

The question is—what is the ideal and programme the Congress leaders and workers are going to put up before the country at the Basirhat session of the Bengal Provincial Political Conference.

At its Madras plenary session, the Congress has freed its objective from the stigma of ambiguity. It has in clear terms boldly asserted that political independence is the national goal. Basirhat Conference will have to chalk out a programme of action with this ideal in view.

The Congress party in the Council has failed to break the Ministry ; the President of the Provincial Congress has lost the Mayoral election. These two

events are being interpreted by many as being damaging to Congress prestige. Any one who is familiar with the affairs of the Bengal Congress will understand that those moving with Congress label inside the Council and the Corporation are not the ones having much to do with the broad Congress policy. They have never undertaken any responsible Congress work nor have they acknowledged its seriousness. They have only spent huge sums of money to become members of these two bodies so as to enjoy the fruits of office in the gift of the Britishers. If they are required to quit their membership to-day, then tomorrow the false robe of Khaddar will drop from their body and they will seek new pastures of self-gratification in other spheres. This is why the Congress has only a tenuous link with the activities of this type of people. The defeat at the polls as such is not a slur on the Congress ; what is derogatory to its prestige is the preponderance in it of these people and the fact that the Council as an institution has been magnified so big before the country.

Call it defeat ? But what is new in it ? Over the centuries we have only been suffering this one ignominy of defeat. It is slavery which we have been inheriting down the succession of generations. And what are these defeats and how many such can

we count ? We had Panipath, Plassey in the past and now having the Council and the Corporation. How much of freedom really have we been able to snatch from the British that we might lose through mere manipulation of a bare couple of votes ? The momentary excitement of a false victory or the misplaced despondency of a fake defeat in the Council or the Corporation—how long yet should these grip our attention ?

This is not the job of the Congress—these intrigues the easy-going city-bred Swarajist Congressmen of Calcutta indulge in for enjoyment of power and position through the practice of groupism. This is not in tune with the heart-beat of Bengal as a whole. Let the Congress delegates present the goal of the national struggle for freedom alone before the country by keeping the Basirhat Conference away from all the injustice and falsehood inherent in the Calcutta brand of partisan quarrels, battle of wits and intrigues and muslim vote-baiting on competitive allurements. When freedom's battle has not even started, it is ridiculous stupidity to square up accounts of victory and defeat.

Without launching on a programme keeping the national goal in its entirety before it, the Congress cannot hope to get rid of the corruption, falsehood, hypocrisy and trickery that have crept into it, which

in turn are the offshoots of the blunder of fragmenting and limiting the national goal. If pursuit of an ideal is our aim, then let the Bengal delegates declare so loudly and search out only those who would not offer to distort an accepted ideal for any temptation or impulse but would heartily and with vigour carry out a clear-cut programme of action until the desired goal is reached.

If we are small in number or if our capacity is not adequate enough for the big task ahead, we should in that event have to start our work with the 'boycott foreign goods, accept Swadeshi' plan only without making the programme far too wide-ranging immediately. Set against the high ideal of attainment of complete freedom, this limited programme may look rather humble indeed. But a small job adroitly done qualifies one to undertake a big effort. Every worker must bear in mind that freedom will have to be acquired through moderately hard work gradually turned into the hardest. And for this Congress is anxious to be relieved of the disgusting exercise of continuously moving in the orbit of Council entry programme. Can the Congress workers release the Congress from this Council octopus? If they can, then alone will the Basirhat session be a success.

There is another issue before Basirhat—the

question of Hindu-Muslim unity. For country's freedom a common nationality of both Hindus and Muslims, unadulterated by communal considerations, is what is necessary in the political plane. If such a unity is not feasible, then the hollow unity forged out by artificial devices based on sharing of the loaves and fishes would only be the more harmful to the country. This is borne out by the past activities of the Swarajists indulging in pacts for bagging Muslim votes in the Council and the Corporation. Why should one community be required to be allured or frightened by the other into joining the freedom movement when the country belongs to both Hindus and Muslims and the sufferings and problems of both are common to both ? It is, therefore, necessary to record a protest against the series of sins the Congress from its Lucknow session until to-day has been perpetrating by feeding the fad of communal interests. Rejecting the view that freedom cannot be attained without Hindu-Muslim unity, the nation has to be told that for the sake of Swaraj, for the sake of Independence, no individual or community is indispensable. It is the blood of the few that wins a struggle and it is the nation as a whole which enjoys the fruits of victory. It appears that by bribing the Muslims to join the Congress fold, it is only the comparatively inferior sections of the

community who are lured into it. That does not make for instilling the national spirit in the minds of the entire Muslim community. Unity of Hindus and Muslims has, therefore, to be established on the basis of equality of rights. Let Basirhat Conference point to that path. Basirhat should aim at indulging less in mere talks and taking up practical work for deliberation in its proceedings.

24

Published in 'The Amrita Bazar Patrika'

on 8. 4. 28.

What I saw at Basirhat.

(By Nobody)

As one belonging to the vast mass of nobodies who form the bulk and the backbone of the nation, if not the nation itself I went to Basirhat to see how the 'somebodies' would give the lead to the 'nobodies' at this critical hour of our country's history. I hoped—nay, expected to see there every body who is anybody in the political life of our province but in this my hopes or expectations were but partially realised. Many a wellknown face identified at one time or other as no-Changer or Liberal was missed, even a few of the Swarajist stalwarts were conspicuous by their absence. But the absence of these notable 'somebodies' marked as it was did not

damp the enthusiasm of the delegates who mustered fairly strong and seemed to be eagerly expectant of a decided lead to be given by the hero of Chittagong whose pagnacity and radicalism have to late, it was being freely said, had no free play in the same and sober atmosphere which the Mayor of Calcutta is expected to breathe. The implied and touching tribute of my brother nobodies to the man who at one time held Chittagong to ransom and led one of the biggest strikes in India gladdened my heart. But I was disappointed and so were the other nobodies who came with hopes in their heart that in this dark hour in our history the recipient of the highest honour that Bengal could confer on her son would rise to the height of the occasion and lead them away from the spectacular fight in the Council to the real fight which leads to jail and to victory.

Arrangement

But before I take up the performance itself I owe it to the organisors to say something about the arrangement. The Pandal was commodious, the site was extremely suitable and even beautiful, while the efforts of the volunteers to make everybody comfortable indicated discipline and will to work hard. Modest and courteous they seemed to go on with their appointed work promptly and yet without

bustle or noise. The Pandal was spartan in simplicity and yet the portraits of the national heroes and the various inspiring inscriptions were arranged in a manner that indicated taste and thought. But there was one serious omission. There were many of agricultural class who wanted to be present but who could not afford to buy tickets. For rupee one meant much to them. Though the attendance was fair yet the Pandal could easily have accommodated over two hundred more men who refused admission were complaining that their utility in the national fight is remembered only when the leaders proclaim 'boycott' or money is required to finance the national struggle. They were far from bitter in the opinions they expressed. But that does not excuse the absence of forethought on the part of the authorities to provide accommodation for these nobodies or improvise some lower priced tickets or other means to admit them. Our leaders talk of the masses but they manage to keep them at a distance."

The Performance

Not that these nobodies would have clearly followed the address of the President or the speech of the Chairman of the Reception Committee. The latter burdened the speech with many English quotations in his unnecessary attempt to prove Lord

Birkenhead and Sir John Simon in the wrong or to demonstrate the thousand times provided, fact that England ruined Indian industries. His long quotation of a speech of Sir John Simon in the House of Commons in support of the Irish Free State Bill one of the 'encouraging features' of which, according to the present Chairman of the Indian Statutory Commission was that 'This Constitution is a Constitution which has been drafted in Ireland by Irishmen for Ireland" was nodoubt intended to show up the inconsistency of Sir John's present position. But the Chairman of the Reception Committee evidently forgot the circumstances which led to the creation of the Irish Free State. Evidently the President did not forget the circumstances because he warned England that if she did not, while there was yet time, agree to a Round Table Conference, India might be a Ireland. But the President did no more than that. He did not tell us what to do if England did not act what is suggested by common-sense or prudence. He has advised Young Bengal to go back to villages to take up social service and to promote economic regeneration of the Province. The Chairman of the Reception Committee has complained that while the Zamindars are found fault with for being attracted to cities every one else who can somehow afford to do so prefer city to rural life. But alas, neither the one

nor the other referred to those brave and patriotic nobodies who since the great Non-Co-operation movement have been working in the villages forgotten and unassisted by the Congress organisations. None of them thought it necessary to remember that the energy and enthusiasm of the workers have been misemployed in election campaigns. Fine materials have either been allowed to waste their unaided efforts in far off villages where they might have been successful if encouragement could be spared from head-quarters or to spend their energy in securing the return of the leaders to Congress, Municipalities or District Boards. These have their use but these are not only things which matter, and this is where the leaders blundered and even now instead of repairing the mischief caused by their blunders are seeking to cover it up by platitudes which have long been worn out. In fact both the speeches were significant in what they omitted to say than what they actually said.

The Conclusion

The Conference, from a nobody's point of view, proved that the leaders have still not made up their mind definitely to approach the masses with a view to educate and prepare them for mass action. They are still bestowing their attention on the Councils,

and think that great triumph would be achieved if only the Provincial Legislatures refuse to form Committees. That there is much bigger task ahead—that if a resolute campaign against the present system is carried on with firm determination, that there would be no halt till we attain our goal—the boycott of foreign cloth or goods or boycott of the Commission in all its stages cannot but be successful. These are included in the bigger fight. The Conference failed to give Bengal the lead that she was looking for. The somebodies had neither confidence in themselves nor in the nobodies who were ready to follow them to any length.

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Subjects Committee Sitting

The Subjects Committee met on Saturday at the Town Hall at 9 p. m. Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta presided. Mostly the resolutions drafted by the Executive Committee of the B. P. C. C. were discussed.

Condolence

The first resolution expressed condolence at the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan, Sj. Rajendranath Lahiri of the Kakori Conspiracy Cases, Srijukta Kshirodbasini Debi, mother of Sjt. Sachindranath Sanyal of the Kakori Conspiracy Case, Sj. Prithwischandra Roy, Sj. Anathbandhu Guha and Lord S. P. Sinha.

Complete Independence as Goal

An amendment was moved by Jnanendranath Baksi to his resolution on the ground that an attempt was being made by the All-Party Conference to draft a constitution for responsible Government. The amendment evoked heated debate. Mr. Sen Gupta said the Congress did not demand independence immediately. As a matter of fact, such a demand would bring ridicule on the Congress. So the resolution was not consistent with the efforts of the All-Party Conference to draft a constitution. The amendment was ultimately withdrawn.

Simon Boycott

The next resolution dealt with the boycott of Simon Commission. The resolution originally contained four parts requesting the people to boycott it completely. The resolution further urged the members of the different legislatures to see that they do not support any proposal in favour of the co-operation with the Commission in any form.

An interesting amendment was moved by a labour delegate who suggested social boycott of the Commission over and above political non-co-operation. Babu Subhashchandra Bose opposed it on the ground that the motion as originally drafted was all right and it was necessary to emphasise the point urged by the

mover of the amendment. Mr. Jalaluddin Hashemi wanted to know the exact reason of the opposition to the amendment. Babu Mohitosh Rai Chaudhuri said that the inclusion of social boycott might alienate the sympathy of some men who might not be ready to go so far, and that, therefore, Subhash Babu had a good deal of force in it. Babu Subhashchandra Bose in the midst of laughter told the House that Mohitosh Babu had put an entirely misleading interpretation on his objection. The amendment was carried.

Visit to Canada

Another important amendment to this resolution was moved by Sj. Mohitosh Rai Chaudhury, who in moving an amendment appealed to the Congress members elected to the Empire Parliamentary Commission to abandon their project to visit Canada in view of the fact that their presence in the country was absolutely necessary for the success of the boycott of Simon Commission.

The President requested the mover to draft the amendment in another form as the one he moved contained some reflections on some prominent Congress leaders.

Sjt. Satyendranath Mitra in supporting the spirit of the amendment explained the present position of

the Nationalists party in the Legislative Assembly. He said that not only the members elected to the Empire Parliamentary Conference but Mr. Jinnah, Mr. Srinivas Iyengar and several other influential members of the Assembly were going away from India in the next two months. When the last resolution about the boycott of the Simon Commission was moved in the Assembly, it was passed with a very narrow majority. If those men leave India now, it was most likely that the next attempt of the Government to commit the lower house of the Indian legislature to a policy of co-operation would be successful.

Sj. Sureschandra Mazumdar supported Sj. Rai Chaudhury. At the suggestion of the President the amendment was changed in the following form :

“In view of the typical situation of the country so long as the Simon business was not finished no prominent leader ought to leave India.”

Sj. Kanailal Ganguly, Md. Jalaluddin Hashemi and some other delegates opposed the amendment and in the above form on the ground that international propaganda might be necessary and therefore it would not be proper to debar the prominent leaders from going out of India.

Sj. Subhashchandra Bose endorsed the same view. In his opinion the activities of the leaders should not

be handicapped by such resolution. Occasion might arise when the departure of some leaders would be necessary. On the motion of Sjt. Subhashchandra Bose the following amendment was accepted and the former one moved by Sjt. Mohitosh Rai Chaudhury was lost :

“In the opinion of this Conference the Working Committee of the All-India Congress Committee should see that in view of the present political situation no prominent leaders or members of the Indian Legislature should leave India except on special business.”

Boycott of British Cloth

The resolution that evoked discussion was about the boycott of British cloth, as a protest against the Simon insult and the detention of the political prisoners without trial.

Several amendments were moved of which the most important was that a list of British goods including sugar, motor car and toys etc. and that other things should be prepared and that boycott in that manner was urged upon the public.

After prolonged discussion the original resolution was carried with an amendment deleting the portion in which boycott was urged as a protest against the Simon Commission and detention of political

prisoners without trial, as inclusion of these clauses might weaken the boycott propaganda.

Jute Cultivation

On the motion of Sj. Subhashchandra Bose, a resolution was adopted appealing to the peasantry of Bengal to cut down the area of jute cultivation during the next year.

Thanks to All-Party Conference

The resolution which raised a good deal of heat in the house in which Sj. Basantakumar Mazumdar took a leading part—was the one appreciating the attempt of the All-Party Convention to form a draft constitution for India. Sj. Majumdar opposed the resolution on the ground that the constitution has been drafted only for submission to the Simon Commission. That action of the leaders and the spirit behind it, said Sj. Mazumdar, was absolutely inconsistent with the Simon Commission boycott resolution. He, therefore, proposed that the constitution ought not to be drafted until and unless the Simon Commission had left India for good.

The President strongly objected to the view of Sj. Mazumdar. He said that the only way to make the Simon Commission boycott effective was to draft a constitution immediately by the members of the All-

Party Conference. If that was not done, many people such as Mahomedans and depressed classes would be tempted to co-operate with the Simon Commission in the hope of obtaining better political rights and privileges for themselves by such co-operation.

After some further discussions the amendment of Sj. Mazumdar was rejected by the House.

Breach of Congress Pledge

When the seventh resolution condemning those who broke the Congress pledge both in the Council and the Corporation came up for discussion. Sj. Sureschandra Mazumdar moved an amendment asking the Congress Committees to become more careful in future. Exclusive emphasis must not be laid, and in the past, on the social standings and length of the purse of the candidates. Mr. Sen Gupta giving an assurance that this would be the case, the amendment was withdrawn.

The Subjects Committee was adjourned late at night for Sunday morning.

Sunday's Proceedings

The Subjects Committee resumed its sitting at the Loan office on Sunday morning at 9 o'clock under the presidency of Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta.

Representation in Councils

The attendance was thinner than on the previous night.

The first resolution taken up for discussion was about the joint electorate and the reservation of seats for the communities on the basis of population. The subjects evoked great heat in the House and ultimately the resolution was amended in a form expressing approval of the resolution adopted at the Madras Congress on the subject.

Re-Distribution of Territories

The next resolution was about re-distribution of territories on a linguistic basis. Sj. Sureschandra Majumdar moved an amendment that the case of Goalpara in Assam should also be considered in this connection.

After some discussion Sj. Mazumdar was prevailed upon to withdraw his amendment.

Futility of Council Programme

The other resolution which caused a good deal of heat and discussion in the House was that about Sj. Mohitosh Rai Chaudhury. The first part of the resolution disapproved of the conduct of the Swarajya Party in the Bengal Legislative Council in co-operating with the reactionaries like Sir Abdur Rahim to bring

about ruin to the ministry. In the second part of the resolution, he appealed to the All India Congress Committe to direct the Congress Party in the legislatures in view of the futility of the Council programme to resign their seats and prepare the country for civil disobedience. Several members objected to the resolution on a point of order. Ultimately on the ground that the second part was inconsistent with resolution on Simon boycott previously passed, it was declared out of order. Sj. Subhashchandra Bose opposed the first part and in doing so, accused "some nationalist papers of an insidious propaganda against the Congress Party." Both Babus Sureschandra Mazumdar and Mohitosh Rai Chaudhury entered a strong protest against Subhash Babu's remarks.

After a good deal of discussion on the subject Sj. Rai Chaudhury was prevailed upon to withdraw his motion.

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An Editorial Note of 'Forward' on 8. 4. 28.

The Presidential Address

The address delivered by Sj. Jatindramohan Sen Gupta as President of the Bengal Provincial Conference at Basirhat is a noble exhortation from the begining to the end to our young patriots to take

up the service of our Motherland and carry on the fight for freedom to a victorious end. The struggle has been going on in Bengal at least for the last twenty years, and Sj. Sen Gupta has rightly thought it unnecessary at this hour of the day to discuss at length the origin and growth of the causes that have so embittered the relation between India and Britain. To-day it is an axiomatic truth that the unnatural relation has to be mended or ended ; and whatever may have been the pious professions of British politicians during the War, the attitude take up by them at the present movement leaves very little room for doubt that it is only by organising and developing our own internal strength that we may hope to secure a recognition of our national rights. The proposal for a Round Table Conference has been rudely brushed aside and the British Parliament still continues to arrogate to itself the right of determining the time and the pace of our national evolution. The only fit answer that India can give to this impudent British claim* is to prepare a constitution of her own and to organise all her resources in its defence. This is the central thought in Sj. Sen Gupta's Presidential address and we are confident that the eloquent appeal that he has made to all sections and communities to forget all petty and selfish considerations and take their part in the

national struggle will evoke the response that it deserves. The framing of a constitution by the accredited representatives of the nation will, as Sj. Sen Gupta has pointed out, not only help us to visualise what it is exactly that we are fighting for, but will indirectly tend to allay all communal fears and jealousies and bring the masses of our people into the national struggle. It is only by explaining to the people the real nature of Swaraj and the economic and other benefits that are likely to accrue therefrom that we shall be able to organise the people on the basis of their present grievances and induce them to put forth their best efforts in securing economic and political emancipation.

The question naturally arises as to whom this task of educating and organising the masses of our countrymen whose co-operation in the national struggle Sj. Sen Gupta has rightly declared to be absolutely indispensable, should be entrusted. The answer that the President of the Provincial Conference has given to this question deserves to be quoted in full, and we invite the attention of all our youngmen to give it the earnest consideration that it deserves. "A volunteer corps," says Sj. Sen Gupta, "should be formed in every district and sub-division of Bengal. They will be in the service of the country under proper leadership and under strict discipline.

They will carry the message of the Congress to the illiterate in propagation of Khaddar and in organising the people on the basis of their grievances. The All-Bengal Volunteer Corps will be an adjunct to the Congress organisation." Youngmen of Bengal have never yet turned a deaf ear to the call of the Mother-land, and we may confidently hope that the fervent appeal made by Sj. Sen Gupta to their patriotism will not fail to evoke a fitting response. To the bold and the determined nothing is impossible, and even though unarmed and isolated, we may yet demonstrate to the world that it is impossible for any alien power to break through the organised passive resistance of a united people.

An Editorial Note of 'The Amrita Bazar Patrika' on 8. 4. 28.

The Conference

The Bengal Provincial Conference that met at Basirhat yesterday was in point of attendance of delegates a success. Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta who presided was nominated by the majority of the District Congress Committees and reference were appropriately made to the services rendered by his father, the late Jatramohan Sen, and by himself. His speech and that of the Chairman of the Reception

Committee Rai Harendranath Chaudhury dwelt mainly on the Simmon Commission. The Chairman by long quotations from the speeches of Sir John showed that the latter had one principle for Ireland and is seeking to apply altogether a different principle to the case of India. Mr. Sen Gupta elucidated the point further and had no difficulty in showing that the British Government yielded to the violence of the Simon Friends and he said that if the British Government refuses to accept the constitution when one has been produced by India, the responsibility for making India a second and bigger Ireland would rest on the shoulders of the British Government. The making of an agreed constitution for India, according to Mr. Sen Gupta, is the principal work before us.

There is nothing in the Presidential speech which has not been said again and again. Yet it was expected that in view of the failure of the Council programme the President would indicate a new direction of activities to make the wishes of the nation felt. He said very little about it. He suggested the organisation of volunteers for Congress work in every district and sub-divisional town. He did not say what the volunteers were to do. In fact, it seems to us that Mr. Sen Gupta had bestowed little thought on his speech which seems to have been composed on

the speech of the moment. As a lead to the country the speech is of little value. As a criticism of the policy of the Government it is trenchant. But we have enough of bitter criticisms and have found that as hard works break no bones, criticism of Government carry us very little further. The Presidential speech should have been more constructive. The references to the agitation for reduction of the cultivation of Jute, the problem of unemployment, boycott of British goods and the unrest among students have been of the most perfunctory character and do not indicate any clear or deep thinking.

Mr. Sen Gupta has repeated the demand for a Round Table Conference. But since the British Government is not in mood to grant it but has, on the other hand, sent an all white commission, he advises the making of a constitution for India by Indian parties which the Government cannot but accept. We do not share his optimism, nor we appreciate his threat that if such a constitution is not accepted India would be another Ireland. The fight has been put off for the future so many times and by Mr. Sen Gupta, that he might have spared the threat. The country would rather have welcomed a clear, definite plan of action. This is absent in the speech. There is not a word about the reverses of the Congress, in the Bengal Legislative Council and

the Corporation. These are sore points no doubt but we think Mr. Sen Gupta might have with advantage pointed out by the defeats have occurred and warned his countrymen against mistakes done by his party. There is a casual reference to Hindu Moslem unity but not a word to strengthen the forces of nationalism.

We cannot say that the speech has been worthy of the occasion or of the person who has delivered it. The speech of the Chairman is full of long English extracts and deals only with a subject, namely, Simon Commission. The two speeches are indicative proverty of thought which for Bengal, long held in respect by the rest of India for intellectual pre-eminence is regrettable.

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An Editorial Note of 'Ananda Bazar Patrika'

on 9. 4. 1928

(Translated)

Basirhat Session

We are not happy with the address delivered by Sj. Jatindramohan Sen Gupta to the Provincial Conference as its President. The political sky of Bengal is overcast with clouds ; wavering, suspicion, vacillation and weakness are all around and the soliders of freedom's battle are depressed as if the nation, mightily struck in its march along its uphill

journey has lost faith in its own strength. In such a situation we expected that a means to wipe out this terrible state of national degradation would be indicated at the Basirhat Conference, that a new strength and a new inspiration would be generated banishing all the doubts and misgivings. But there is nothing of the kind in President Sen Gupta's address. He has made some very out-dated customary utterances and, like the moderates of yester-years, has only made severe criticism of the administrative policies of the British Government with various English quotations. Sj. Sen Gupta's address could probably extort praise twentyfive years ago ; but to-day it is outmoded.

Sjt. Sen Gupta is one of the top leaders of the same Swarajya Party which has been providing the political leadership during the past few years and, as such, been guiding the Congress programme. As a result, they have contained the entire energy of the national movement within the bounds of the Council and the Assembly, etc. They have found particular delight in indulging in wordy warfares with the Britishers, in fierce speeches and in the battle of the boxes. They thought that they would thus succeed in defeating the British Government and get hold of Swaraj like a ripe fruit. But it has become very obvious from the activities of recent years that the

Council-Assembly-centred programme has failed. That way we have not progressed towards attainment of Swaraj nor is there such a possibility in future either. If we cannot harness the drive of the national movement to work of nation-building by diverting the same from the parlance of British power, if we cannot inspire our dumb millions to plunge headlong into the struggle for freedom, then there is no hope for success in this fight.

This is why we had expected that Sjt. Sen Gupta would in his address appreciate the gravity of the present situation and prescribe a solution for it. But barring some bitter criticism of the Simon Commission and a few routine statements we have not come across any new message of hope in it. Bengal has ever led India in the political field and shown newer paths of national struggle but the speeches which the President and the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Basirhat Conference have delivered are only indicative of the poverty and lack of originality of thinking of the Bengalees. As Bengalees it pains our heart to have to say this.

In his message which he sent wishing success of the Conference, Mahatma Gandhi hoped that the Provincial Conference of Bengal would not forget the poor and the uneducated masses of the country. In these few words of the Mahatma was a broad hint of

the course along which our political movement had to be directed in the near future. In the days when Sj. Sen Gupta and his colleagues had conducted the national movement they did not care to keep the people in their mind nor did they make any effort to organise the people and prepare them for the struggle for Swarj. Neither is it indicated in the addresses of Sjt. Sen Gupta and Choudhury that they would do so in the years ahead. Sj. Sen Gupta has in the context of the Simon Commission asked for the boycott of British goods and, of course, advised the youngmen of Bengal to go to the village for rural reconstruction work also. But all these sounded as story disjointed thoughts dished out as if only under the compulsion of an imposed liability. He has not thought out comprehensively how such a mighty undertaking has to be built up and regulated. Does he not know that because of lack of inspiration and initiative on their part the branch Congress Committees that had come up in the villages of Bengal have since ceased to exist or that those workers who had been working in the villages in starving conditions and under all manner of hardship and torture have been compelled to give up their work being despised and neglected ? Does he not know that the leaders by employing the workers as mere vote-catching agents have broken the latter's very backbone ? And so long as those

mistakes have not been corrected, we can hardly be enabled ever to lead a genuine movement for the attainment of Swaraj.

Moreover, there is no means of making the nation strong so long as there is no parting with the suicidal policy under which the Swarajist Party has backed communalism by encouraging the unjust muslim demands for the sake of electoral victories and has introduced bribing, fraud and intrigues of selfish interests into the struggle for Swaraj. This struggle is a joint struggle of both the Hindus and the Muslims and both will have to suffer and make sacrifices equally. We will never be able to acquire strength unless we can place this new ideal before us as we proceed to carry out our programme.

The broad fact is that attainment of Swaraj or Independence is dependent on strength ; we can never attain it by hair splitting arguments entered with the Britishers. For this what we need is sacrifice and suffering—sacrifice of everything if need be. It is a matter of regret that the leaders of Bengal have not demonstrated any capacity to take the nation along this only sure path for the attainment of Independence. The deathless resolve that the village Kisans of Bardoli have been displaying under the leadership of a few unknown and non-descript Satyagrahis should be an ideal worth emulating for the whole of

India. If the leaders of Bengal had been imbued with that ideal and had found the means of arousing and organising the masses, then alone could Basirhat Conference become a success.

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An Editorial Note of 'Forward'
on 10. 4. 28

The Chairman's Speech

* * * The speech, taken in its entirety, is an able and forceful analysis of the outstanding problems confronting the country. Through the bulk of the speech is confined to a criticism of the British Government's action in appointing an All-White Commission for determining the future constitution of India, Rai H. N. Choudhury's remarks on Swadeshi and economic regeneration and the problem of compulsory primary education will be also read with interest and profit.

The appointment of the Simon Commission against the pronounced wishes of the united Indian nation has eclipsed all other minor issues. It is only in the fitness of things that Rai Harendranath Chowdhury should devote a greater portion of his speech to the criticism of the Simon Commission and of the procedure adopted by the British Government for framing the future Indian Constitution. It is a

procedure diametrically opposed to those adopted for determining the constitutions of the Dominions of Canada, South Africa and Australia and of the Irish Free State. Speaking on the Irish Free State Bill when it was on the legislative anvil in 1922, Sir John Simon said, "I believe it would be true to say that constitutions which promote prosperity and loyalty, and which have found to be lasting constitutions for subordinate states in our Empire have almost without exception either actually or virtually, have framed by those who were to live under themselves." Commanding the Irish Free State Bill before the House Sir John Simon further observed, "I think it is one of encouraging features of the situation, that this Constitution is a constitution which has been drafted in Ireland by Irishmen for Ireland." It is perhaps an irony of fact that the man who spoke these words has now been made the Chairman of the Indian Statutory Commission. Does not Sir John Simon feel the discrepancy between his position in 1922 and his present position as Chairman of the Indian Statutory Commission? However big a man he may be, it is not for him, not for any mortal belonging to an alien race, to frame a Constitution for India, a Constitution that would 'promote prosperity and loyalty.' The apt and well-chosen quotations which Rai H. N. Choudhury cited from Sir John

Simon's speeches supply in themselves a damaging criticism of the Commission and of the frivolous allegations made in the British press that it is the absence of any Indian on the Commission or it is wounded vanity and sensitiveness that are fostering the present agitation for the boycott of the Simon Commission. National self-respect demands that the Indian nation should refuse to co-operate with the Commission in all its stages. Withdrawal of co-operation cannot by itself foil the work of the Commission. The time, manner and method of the appointment of the Commission have made it abundantly clear that the Tory Government are trying to strengthen the foundations of British rule in India. Britain is in no mood to relax her hold upon any of her dependencies, far less upon India. The breakdown of the Anglo-Egyptian negotiations is not without lesson for this country. The leaders of the Indian national movement are therefore confronted with the problem of how to make the boycott effective and complete. Rai Harendranath Choudhury does not ignore this aspect of the problem, and the latter part of his address is devoted to the sketching of a political programme and of our future line of action.

An Editorial Note of 'The Amrita Bazar

Patrika' on 10. 4. 28.

Basirhat Conference

One of the most noticeable features of the Basirhat Conference was the manner in which resolutions disagreeable to the present day leaders were dealt with both in the Subjects Committee and the open Conference. A few instances will bear us out. Notice of some very important resolutions regarding the organisation of the peasants and workers had been given by some members in time amongst whom was Dr. Bhupendranath Datta, brother of Swami Vivekananda. Although so many subjects of the *mamuli* nature were considered and either accepted or rejected, this matter about the far-reaching importance of which there cannot be any question was not considered even fit for a discussion. The fate of two other motions also deserve notice in this connection. One of them wanted the Conference to disapprove of the recent activities of the Congress Party in the Bengal Council and to recommend to the A. I. C. C. their withdrawal from Legislatures in view of the futility of the Council programme. On the curious ground that the Subjects Committee had already adopted a resolution asking the Legislators not to co-operate with the Simon Commission, the most

important part of this motion was ruled out of order. The other relating to the Empire Parliamentary Conference at Canada to which some of the most prominent members of the Swarajya Party have got themselves elected, was also treated in the same way. The mover appealed to those gentlemen that in view of the work remaining to be done in India in connection with the boycott of Simon Commission they should abandon for the present their projected visit to Canada. But the disension of the matter was stifled by the President on the motion of a certain Swarajist leader who rose to a point of order on a ground, which common sense fails to understand.

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An Editorial Note of 'The Bengalee'
on 10. 4. 28

Mr. Sen Gupta's Presidential Address

We have been favoured with an English translation of the Presidential address at Basirhat at the Provincial Conference. That the address is flimsy and unstrung and that the usual claptrap has not even the saving grace of piquancy, is no doubt, explained by the collapse and exhaustion of Swarajist leaders after the debacle at the Corporation Hall. The co-equivocations and evasions which are a prominent feature of Mr. Sen Gupta's speech, are too numerous

for individual treatment, and we confine ourselves to some of its salient points.

The Student Movement

That Mr. Sen Gupta would not venture to displease the students was a foregone conclusion. With a depleted treasury and the gift of Corporation patronage last, the sole power for mischief of the Swarjist Party consists in its ability to collect students for hustling and abusing opponents, for besieging voters, and for creating that noise and excitement which is the be-all and end-all of Swarajist existence. That over two thousand volunteers could be sent to Howrah for blocking pulling booths, for impressing on the voters the consequences of voting against Swarajist nominees, for howling down speakers in meetings, where as barely fifty could be required for legitimate purposes is some indication of the utility of students to Swarajist leaders. Mr. Bipin-chandra Pal did not overstate the case, when he described these leaders as reckless exploiters of undisciplined youth for personal propaganda.

After acquitting the students of charges of indiscipline, and in sub-ordination Mr. Sen Gupta utters a series of flattering platitudes about the 'vivacity', the 'vigour' and the 'independence' of youth. He then comes to the convenient conclusion

that the "fight of the young men is against ruthless repression launched upon them by the Government." We were not aware that when the City College boys, secretly at dead of night, introduced the image of Saraswati into the College Hostel after having issued invitation cards for Puja at the usual place outside the Hostel—that they were doing so at the instance of Sir Stanley Jackson. We were not aware that when the College boys trespassed into the Brahmo Samaj, where Holy Service was going on and made beasts of themselves that they were instigated into their hooliganism by the Bureaucracy. We did not know that when they chased the Hostel Superintendent, or made abusive demonstrations against Principal Moitra, that they were carrying out the orders of Sir Charles Tegart. We did not hear it suggested that the boys of the Scottish Churches College, when they were preventing students from entering the College premises and were picketting under the direct guidance of Mr. Subhashchandra Bose—they ever said or thought that they had any grievance against the Government.

Mr. Sen Gupta's illogicality, his inability to present even a plausible case for the students, his arrant cowardice in refraining from speaking the truth for fear of thinking the ranks of the Swarajist Militia, is too transparent to mislead anybody but the intended victims in College square. We congratulate

Mr. Sen Gupta's ingenuity which enabled him to gain the double object of low-towing to the students and of abusing the Government by puerile and irrelevant statements.

Round Table Conference

Mr. Sen Gupta's contribution on these catch-words demonstrates the absence of any clear notions whatsoever. He is like the Irishman who said : " I am damned if I know what I want, but I shall not be happy till I get it." This Round Table Conference according to Mr. Sen Gupta must be held by persons duly elected, and with unquestioned probity and impartiality." This ideal body will then proceed to formulate demands and the Government must enter into an undertaking that the decisions will be given effect to without modification or restriction."

Shorn of surplusage Mr. Sen Gupta's proposition shows the brilliant simplicity of genius. A. B. C and D will sit round a table and the Government binds itself by a previous promise to carry out such orders as may be issued by them. But surely we can do without the 'Round-Table' and without the 'Conference'. Have we not got the demands formulated already by the 'men of probity' assembled at the last Congress ? Have they not demanded Complete Independence ? Why should we think that the

demand would be different because they sit on Chairs round a table and not squat on Khadi-covered ground as they did at the Congress? The demand is Complete Independence' and the Government on Mr. Sen Gupta's hypothesis has previously agreed to meet this demand without "modification or restriction." May be Mr. Sen Gupta is willing to wait a few months or years for 'Complete Independence'—but if the rulers have to clear out, bag and baggages to-day or after a short time how are they interested in the matter of the constitution for India? If they are a party under notice to quit, what does it matter to them, whether Pandit Jawaharlal is crowned at Delhi, or India is governed by Sikhs and Moslems, or it has a Parliament of its own?

Assuming again, with hesitation, that Mr. Sen Gupta is willing to tolerate the usurpers for a short time just to enable us to put our house in order, he has not condescended to tell us what will happen if at the Round Table some "men of probity" require joint electorates whereas others of equal probity require communal representation? What happens if at the Round Table the Indian Princes take by the scruff of the neck, people whose only weapons are the voice and the pen? No Swarajist leader up to the present movement has cared to face facts, because they are unpleasant and difficult to get over, and

‘why should Mr. Sen Gupta be an exception ?

Mr. Sen Gupta has declared in his speech that he does not recognise the British Parliament. He might refuse to recognise that sun rises in the East, or that fire burns, or that there is water in the sea. How hypocritically the Swarajists are about the British Parliament are shown by the fact that stalwarts like Nehru and Goswami are going to Canada, an advantage they enjoy only because they are under the British Parliament. The vapouring of Mr. Sen Gupta about the ‘British Parliament’ and the ‘Foreign Body’ may be left severely alone with the contempt which such calculated hypocrisy deserves. The only choice is between colossal hypocrisy and idiocy. Yet, they are not useless to Mr. Sen Gupta. At least some students in College Square predisposed to him by his flattery, may make the mistake of taking him seriously and of ennobling him as a hero, who cares as much as the foreigners and the British Parliament, as they do for their tutors under the inspiration of Mr. Subhashchandra Bose.

Boycott

Mr. Sen Gupta has devoted thirteen lines to ‘Boycott’—a campaign for which thousand volunteers were enrolled, and who were so useful later on before the Council and Corporation Halls. In stating that

the use of Swadeshi cloth is "bound to lead to a grave food problem in Britain." Mr. Sen Gupta is echoing his master's voice, for had not Mr. Subhash Bose assured College Square audience that there would be a "revolution in Great Britain." Mr. Sen Gupta could not spare a sentence for indicating what had to be done in India for ensuring sufficient production without which the 'Boycott' is bound to fail—but in strains similar to that of his master, he ends with the rodomontade "the weapon of boycott will excite terror in the mind of the foreigners." As Indians sincerely wish it were so, but we know as well as Mr. Sen Gupta, that at present the foreigner treats his 'Boycott Campaign' with amused indifference.

The Birthright of Freedom

Mr. Sen Gupta attempts to be eloquent in stating that this right has been denied. Who denied the birthright of millions, by decreeing that their touch is contamination, that drinking water from their hands is abomination and eternal damnation? Who denied the birthright of our women? Why was no hand stretched to open their prison doors before the Missionary and the Satanic Western Civilisation appeared on the land? If so slight a progress has been made in nearly two centuries who is responsible for that? Who has made us the slave of narrow-

minded fanaticism which has sapped our manhood? and conducted to our existence as slaves? Why does not Mr. Sen Gupta waste a word over these birthrights? Why does he not enlighten his audience as to how the birthright of millions will be respected immediately after his 'Round Table Conference' is over? Mr. Sen Gupta can ill afford to touch these hard and inconvenient facts. They do not lend themselves to that enthusiasm which is evoked when undivided condemnation is thrown on the Government.

Repression and Revolt

In dealing with Indians who "were invited to bloodshed", Mr. Sen Gupta was handling a difficult situation. To condemn them is to jeopardise popularity. The approbation of them may attract the application of sections of the Indian Penal Code—and no one has studied that law better than Mr. Sen Gupta. Mr. Sen Gupta takes the only course open to him in an exigent situation. He admires the love of freedom of his heroes, earns kudos by blaming the Government and avoids undesirable consequences by stating "we have not lent our support to the part of rebellion. We are not advocates of unrest." Mr. Sen Gupta's resourcefulness enables him, to hit the snake without smashing his stick.

A Great Blank

We have seen that Mr. Sen Gupta has not wasted a single word on construction work. The Swarajists are not out for work. Their sole mission is to create excitement and one situation after another. Constructive work has its only use in luring people to offer subscriptions—which have the habit of going the way of the Village 'Reconstruction Fund.' May we summarise the situation for our leaders :

(1) 'Boycott of British Cloth' ensures food shortage in Britain and prosperity in India.

Question—What should we do to ensure production in India ?

Answer—Blank.

(2) 'Hindu-Moslem Unity' is essential for Indian freedom.

Q : What should we do for gaining that end ?

Ans : Blank.

(3) We cannot allow Parliament to interfere.

Q : What should we do to get rid of Parliament ?

Ans : Blank.

(4) The 'Present System of Education' is unhealthy.

Q : What should we do to get a better substitute ?

Ans : Blank.

(5) Q : What should we do to remove the

grinding and vicious social customs which deny the birthright of millions ?

Ans : Blank.

(6) Q : What is your advice as to the work to be done by the people of Bengal ?

Ans : Unfurl the tri-colour flag of liberty, fight the battle of freedom, get rid of the British Parliament, build up a glorious future, be brave, efface self-interest and do something in some manner, at some time—so that India may be free.

Forward's Panegyrics.

Forward in its wild enthusiasm has described the Presidential speech as 'momentous.' With this word and its aquatic relations we have become familiar in the columns of *Forward*. If a student has shied his shoe as his tutor, it is a case of 'unfurling of the flag of liberty in the battle for freedom.' If Mr. Sarat-chandra Bose makes an irrelevant and abusive personal attack it is an 'epoch-making speech' containing a 'scathing exposure' of his victim. If a leader happens to sneeze as the untoward consequences of wafted snuff from a neighbouring nose, it is a 'Momentous Nasal Explosion.' If the British continue to usurp our land, after the Basirhat speech, the explanation lies in the fact that their common

sense has enabled them to discover that behind the thunderous speakers before an annual audience, there lurk benevolent westernised faces ; and that the last thing the speakers want is the removal of the British or of the comfort of 'Western Civilisation.'

32

An Editorial Note of 'The Bengali'

on 12. 4. 28

A Serious Matter

Most of the tomfoolery at Basirhat will soon be forgotten. There is one matter, however, which needs special mention. It is well-known that a criminal case is pending before the District Magistrate of Howrah over the 'Bamungachi Disturbance.' The case was instituted before a Deputy Magistrate and was transferred to the file of the District Magistrate. The District Magistrate has been holding an enquiry. During the pendency of this enquiry the Basirhat saturnalia took place. One Dr. S. K. Basu is reported to have moved a resolution 'condemning the firing at Bamungachi' and in the course of his vehement speech said that he "had been to the place of firing and after enquiry found that there was no justifiable cause to open firing which was only resorted to because the victims had unfortunately

'black skins on their persons.' One Maulavi Altaf Ali, in seconding the resolution, said that "they should not exhaust their feelings by condemning the action alone but should teach the murderers a lesson by organising the labourers and peasants." The above quoted passages are taken from the report of the official organ of the 'Swaraj Party.' Every one deplores the unfortunate loss of lives and the other casualties. The whole incident demands a close scrutiny. The District Magistrate is himself holding an enquiry and the complainants are ably and fully represented. Mr. Mrinalkanti Bose, President of the 'Bengal Trade Union Federation' and Mr. K. C. Roy Chaudhury, M. L. C. of the 'Trade Union Congress' are watching the proceedings on behalf of their respective Labour organisations. During the pendency of the enquiry, Dr. S. K. Basu expressed his opinion in the manner mentioned above and Maulavi Altaf Ali condemned the persons who fired as murderers. An expression of opinion like this during the pendency of a judicial enquiry is against all ordinary notions of justice and fair play. Indulging in such comments renders the administration of justice very difficult. A certain amount of latitude may always be permitted at a political mummery but there ought to be a limit to that. Besides, this sort of irresponsibility pollutes the current of public life.

Tittle Tattle

Tour programmes of the Viceroy and Governors of Provinces are published for the information of the public. '*Forward*' has accordingly published a tour programme of ex-King Subhashchandra Bose. Imitation is said to be the sincerest form of flattery.

* * *

Can any one explain why the valiant Saratchandra Bose's voice was silent at Basirhat? His royal brother is reported to have spoken on almost all the resolutions. Voice and manners are about the only things left to the aspirant to any vacancy going.

* * *

The Basirhat Conference began badly and ended worse. The elements gave it a nasty 'cold douche' when it had been just about an hour under way. And the leaders on their way back were troubled by having a whole compartment derailed. It was about to be a case of 'the wreckers wrecked,' but fortunately there was no casualty. That is what comes of 'going back to the village' to hold a political conference.

33

An Editorial Note of 'The Amrita Bazar Patrika'
on 11. 4. 28.

Nothing New

Disappointed as we are that Mr. Sen Gupta's Presidential Address at Basirhat contained nothing

new or striking we can appreciate his remark in his concluding speech that "there was nothing new to be said on the problems before the country." It is a trite saying that the new is but any other form of the old. The present generation borrows from the old and as the world is getting older, our debt to our forebears is heavily increasing. It has been truly said that the modern world is very unfavourable to the growth of genius. Some of the so-called geniuses of the world would have been lost in the crowd had they lived now. It is their good fortune that they lived thousands of years ago. Yet even in this age some are able to impress on their fellowmen by their utterances. Even now we hear of 'good speeches' or 'good writings.' Do the speeches or writings thus spoken of contain anything new? In ninety-nine cases out of hundred they do not. Yet people are impressed. They will not be able to tell you why. No definition of a good speech or writing can be given. If Mr. Sen Gupta wants us to tell him how he could make his speech a good one, we could not say. But though it is not possible to give a negative definition. Nothing makes a speech more tiresome than the repetition of the commonest of the common places of the market. And when you propose to repeat these common places exactly in the manner in which people have seen or heard them repeated

from day to day you must be ready to hear unpleasant things even from the friendliest of quarters. When a great worker speaks of the value of his work and makes his observations not unnecessarily long people hear him with patience and even with respect though they have heard the same thing over again. That is a tribute to the man. But the case is different with leaders of the intelligentsia who have to address an audience as intelligent as himself. The preparation of a speech for him is not an easy job. This is our warning to all whom it may concern.

Turning to the resolutions adopted at the Conference we cannot say that they were unnecessary. In fact we are ready to concede that all of them are good and should have been passed. But we confess the cumulative effect of these resolutions does not bring home to us that any definite lead has been given to the country.

The resolution declaring 'Complete Independence as the goal of India, has rightly been given the place of honour. But the army that will wrest from the foreigners the complete independence of India. We mean the volunteers have found place in an omnibus resolution moved from the Chair in these laconic words : "This Conference urges for an organisation of a permanent band of volunteers for national work". The resolution on 'Simon Commission' comes

next quite properly in a ponderous shape. Resolutions thanking the 'All-Party Conference' for the trouble taken by it, boycotting British goods, particularly British cloths, requesting the people to wear 'Khaddar,' condemning the shooting at Bamungachee, accepting the unity resolution passed in the 'Madras Congress' were also adopted. A resolution for the restriction of 'Jute Cultivation' which makes a departure from the *mamuli* resolutions passed at our 'Provincial Conference' was passed. Towards the fag end of the Conference the following resolution was also passed.

"This Congress organisations throughout the country." The poor Congress workers should feel grateful that the Conference did not wholly forget them. Should they read in the resolution the meaning that the leaders propose to shed their responsibility in regard to them and pass it on to "the people of Bengal." Who are requested to look after them they must remember what Mr. Sen Gupta had said about them in his speech namely, that they were to be strictly honorary, that is, they must either be sons of rich men or have knowledge of the art of living on air and water.

The omnibus resolution moved from the Chair for want of time covers a variety of subjects from the drink evil 'to the 'health of Bengali youths.'

The order in which the resolutions were moved and adopted shows absence of order, yet it may be said that criticisms of our masters came first, pious wishes came next and anarchy came afterwards. The order of the resolutions is an eloquent commentary on the politics of the day. There is still the faith in the Councils or at any rate no desire to carry the struggle further a-field. Even the members of the Legislative Council elected on Congress ticket have not cared to do their primary duty to their constitutions, namely, to educate them as to the national problems, the attitude of the Government or even what they have done or are doing. Members of the Council who have acted contrary to the Congress decisions in the Council or the Corporation have rightly been censured but not a word has been said about the failure of the 'faithful' members of the party to utilise their time out of the session of the Council to tour among their constituencies conducting a propaganda of political education among them. Mr. Sen Gupta has read somewhere of those organisation of masses on their grievances and threw out the advice in these very words for it was worth and for the benefit of those whom it might concern. The Conference has not passed a single resolution for the organisation of the masses on their grievances. We are under no delusion that the passing of a resolution

like this would have made any difference in the actual result. But this shows how our leaders are deluding themselves by the emptiest of platitudes. The Chairman of the Reception Committee made a reference in his speech to 'Mass Education' without caring to explain his idea more fully. He could, if we have understood what he meant aright, give a lead to the country that would have been of far greater worth than all the resolutions passed by the Conference put together and certainly his heavy tirade against Sir John Simon and his Commission.

We cannot presume to offer advice to our leaders. But we think it would be better if one resolution is adopted as the main resolution of the Conference giving in outline the activities that the Conference desired to be carried on in the coming year and also providing for the agencies that would carry on these activities. The President of the Conference spoke of action as distinguished from mere resolutions. We suggest that the main resolution of the Conference should be one of action. On this resolution there should be sufficient deliberation. All other resolutions may simply be moved and seconded with or without speeches and if with speeches they must be as short as possible. This alone would give a business-like character to the deliberations of the Conference. Serious-minded people do not allow themselves and

others to be lost in a bewildering mass of criticisms in pious wishes. That such things are done year after year in our 'Annual Conferences' shows that we have not yet begun to cultivate the habit of doing things methodically. The Nation is entitled to know the mind of the Conference which at present is lost in a maze of resolutions, good, bad, indifferent, important and unimportant.

34

An Editorial Note of 'The Mussalman'

on 13. 4. 28

Bengal Provincial Conference

The Basirhat session of the Bengal Provincial Conference, held on Saturday and Sunday last, has been, it is gratifying to note, a success, although the Mussalmans who form about 55 per cent. of the total population of Bengal were very poorly represented on it. If the Mussalmans are to blame for not taking as much interest in the affairs of national bodies like the Congress, the Hindus who are at the helm of these bodies are, we are afraid, to a large extent responsible for the apathy of the Mussalmans. Rightly or wrongly, the bulk of the educated Mussalmans believe that it will be prejudicial to their interests if they join these bodies, and the Hindus who have better political education and training and

are therefore at the head of the national public bodies have hardly done anything that may attract the Mussalmans to these bodies and make them feel that the interests of the Indians as a whole, irrespective of caste and creed, will be equally served if they join the bodies and participate in their deliberations. It may, of course, be said that to work for the country, for the attainment of its freedom, is as much the duty of the Mussalmans as of the Hindus and why the Hindus should 'go out of their way' to 'coax and cajole' the Mussalmans in order to prevail upon them to do their own duty. But, we are afraid, an attitude like this will be unstatesmanlike—unstatesmanlike specially on the part of those who are practically more advanced than the Mussalmans. The Mussalmans must be made to understand that the majority rule after the attainment of India's freedom will not be, so far as the minorities are concerned, as oppressive as, or more oppressive than the existing bureaucratic rule. They must also be made to understand—not merely by words also by actions—that the interests of all the children of the soil are mainly identical. They must further be made to believe that no communalism may pass for nationalism in this country. If they follow in the footsteps of the late Deshabandhu Das, they will be doing yeoman's service to the cause of nationalism in India and will

accelerate the movement for India's national freedom.

We are glad to note that Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta's Presidential Address at the Conference breathes nationalism and national ideas and sentiments. Before we touch upon many other salient points in his speech we would quote the concluding passages and show how he gave expression to the feelings and sentiments of a true nationalist. He said :

“Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Allow me to call you again to join the battle of freedom ; let all difference be obliterated and all self-interest be effaced ; stand up as a nation under the ‘Indian Tricolour’, determined to recover your right. Do not fall back from fear of imprisonment, deportation, repression or even death, but send your call to the lowliest of the lowly and let them understand that the terror which keeps them down is all hollow and will give way to a challenge.

My appeal lies to the youth of Bengal. It is for them to bear the brunt of the fight and build up a glorious future. It is for them to re-instil into Indian heart message of hope and courage.

To-day we can spare none. I appeal to the Mussalmans, I appeal to the Hindus—I appeal to all the communities and institutions to join in this holy work. A great Indian Nation—freedom for India—and peace for world,—in the name of God I call upon

every son and daughter of India to join in carrying out this noble mission."

There could be no exhortation nobler than this. If all the communities and institutions, including, of course, the Congress, act in accordance with the spirit of the above exhortation and the different Communities Act in a manner so that all mutual distrust may be removed, the path to India's goal will at once be easy and smooth and its attainment may be an event of to-morrow.

Our own views on the Statutory Commission are well known to our readers and we agree with whatever Mr. Sen Gupta has said in this Connexion. We would only say that the special exhortation to boycott the Commission ought not to have made to the Mussalmans alone but also to the section of non-Muslims who are also out to co-operate with the Commission. As we have already said, there is mutual inter-communal distrust, and had there been no such distrust we think no section of the Mussalmans or of any other community, who think, though wrongly, that they can serve their interests by co-operating with the Commission, would have refused to respond to the call for boycott. As we have said from time to time, the Commission does not keep an open mind. It has been appointed to submit a certain kind of report and the bureaucracy in this country will supply it

with materials in order to enable it to come to the pre-conceived conclusions. Any evidence that will not suit its purpose will not be duly considered or will be brushed aside with the help of sophisms. The appointment and compositions of the Commission is not at all *bona fide* and, moreover, Sir John Simon, when he attempted to show that the proposed Indian Committee and the members of the Commission would have equal status and thus to dupe the Indian boycotters, betrayed lamentable lack of honesty of purpose, and one can therefore easily imagine how any evidence that will be unpalatable to the Commission will be treated by it. On the other hand the sort of evidence it wants will be forthcoming in abundance through interested agencies. In these circumstances it will be absolutely useless on the part of any section of the people to approach the Commission with begging bowls in hand. Why should self-respect be sacrificed for the sake of some supposed personal or sectional gain ?

Mr. Sen Gupta has laid especial emphasis on the making of a constitution for India and has drawn to this question the attention of the Legislative Assembly, the Congress, the Muslim League and such other organizations. As our readers are aware, we have also pointed out in these columns the extreme need for an agreed Constitution : it is a great

desideratum at the present moment. It is to be particularly borne in mind in this connexion that an agreed constitution cannot possibly be one which may be fully approved of by all the communities and political parties. It will be a "compromise" constitution, it will be one where the different parties will meet one another half way. The evolving of such a constitution is extremely necessary in order that we Indians may meet Lord Birkenhead's challenge and show to the world that, though un-united we are, we may be united for the attainment of a common object when such unity becomes indispensable in the vital interests of the nation as a whole. We only hope that Mr. Sen Gupta's appeal will meet with due response from all the political leaders and organizations, especially from the Hindu Mahasabha and its propagandists.

It is not possible for us to touch upon the various other questions dealt with in the presidential address in the course of this newspaper article. The boycott of British goods, especially of British cloth, urged by Mr. Sen Gupta will, let us hope, be taken up by the country as a whole. If the Indians as a whole have grievances against the British Government and the British people, Mussalmans as a confraternity have much greater grievances against them. We use no hyperbolic language when we say that the British

Government has always been the greatest enemy of Islam. Ransack the history of the Muslim countries, ransack the history of India and you will be fully convinced of the truth of this assertion. If you can touch the pocket of the Britishers by the boycott of British goods you put pressure on them to redress your grievances and rouse them to their sense of justice. What the English people understand is pressure, economic or otherwise moral considerations do not determine their attitude in regard to any such question. So if you can bring economic pressure to bear upon them, they may be comhelled to listen to you and redress your grivences and satisfy your demands,

Bengal Provincial Conference

Year	Place	Presidents.
1888	Calontta	Mahendralal Sarkar.
1889	Caloutta	Pearymohan Mukherjee.
1890	Calcutta	Pringle Kennedy.
1891	Caloutta	Revd. A. Paton Begg.
1892	Calcutta	Baikunthanath Sen.
1893	No Session	
1894	Calcutta	Narendranath Sen.
1895	Berhampur	Anandamohon Bose.
1896	Krishnagar	Guruprasad Sen.
1897	Natore	Satyendranath Tagore.
1898	Dacca	Kalicharan Bandyopadhyay
1899	Burdwan	Ambicacharan Majumdar.
1900	Bhagalpur	Binaykrishna Deb.
1901	Midnapur	Nagendranath Ghosh.
1902	No Session.	
1903	Berhampur	Jagadindranath Ray.
1904	Bardwan	Asutosh Chaudhuri.
1905	Mymensingh	Bhupendranath Bose.
1906	Barisal	Abdul Rasul.
1907	Berhampur	Dipnaraian Singh.
1908	Pabna	Rabindranath Tagore.
1909	Hooghly	Baikunthanath Sen.
1910	Calcutta	Ambicacharan Majumdar.
1911	Faridpur	Yatindranath Ray Chaudhuri
1912	Chittagong	Abdul Rasul.
1913	Dacca	Aswinikumar Datta.

1914	Comilla	Byomkes Chakravarti.
1915	Krishnagar	Matilal Ghosh
1916	No Session.	
1917	Calcutta	Chittaranjan Das.
1918	Hooghly	Akhilchandra Datta.
Do	(Special Session)	
	Calcutta	Kaminikumar Chanda
1919	Mymensingh	Jatramohan Sen.
1920	Midnapur	A. K. Fazlul Haque.
1921	Barisal	Bipinchandra Pal.
1922	Chittagong	Basanti Debi.
1923	Jessore	Syamsundar Chakravarti.
1924	Sirajgunj	M. M. Akram Khan.
	(Pabna)	
1925	Faridpur	Chittaranjan Das.
1926	Krishnagar	Birendranath Sasmal
1927	Majn (Howrah)	Jogendranath Chakravarti.
1928	Basirhat	Jatindramohan Sen Gupta.
1929	Rangpur	Subhashchandra Bose.
1930	Rajshahi	Bipinbihari Ganguli.
1931	Beharampur	Hardayal Nag.
1932	No Session.	
1933	No Session.	
1934	No Session,	
1935	Dinajpur	Indranarayan Sen.
1936	No Session.	
1937	No Session.	

1938	Bishnupur	Jatindramohan Roy.
		(Bankura)
1939	Jalpaiguri	Saratchandra Bose.
1940	Dacca	Joytishchandra Ghosh.
